

The Saturday Evening Post

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LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST BY ELLA WHEELER.

When I kneel at the throne of God praying for thee,
What shall the boon that I ask of Him be?
Shall I pray that thy life
May know nothing of strife,
And never a line mark thy brow, smooth and fair,
But sweet as a song
Thy life flow along,
Unchecked by shadows, unclouded by care?
Shall I pray that you ever may dwell under skies
As calm and as blue as your beautiful eyes?
That riches and gold
And wealth all untold
At the turn of thy hand may in plenteous flow,
And thy life as a dream,
In Eden land seem
With nothing of sorrow, and nothing of woe?
Or shall my prayer be that your heart may be pure,
Through sunshine and shadow your faith
Fixed and sure,
In Christ crucified,
Who now sits by side
With God in the city above.
Oh there at His feet
In glory complete
May you dwell, blest with infinite mercy and love.

BROWN JIM.

A Tale of the Sierra Nevada.

(CONCLUDED.)

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST BY MRS. MARGARET HOSMER, AUTHOR OF "SAVED BY HYDROPHOBIA," &c.

When they had gone, little Belle, who was growing large enough to miss familiar faces, cried pitifully for her loving friend and nurse; who, to tell the truth, nearly broke her own tender heart in saying farewell to her. But the passing sorrow over, she turned the more clinging to the remaining two, and "Brown Jim" became daily more and more devoted to the little waif the storm had carried to his cabin door. His young partner shared his feelings, and loved the child in his different way, almost as absorbingly; one good deed the little creature had accomplished already. The quick and somewhat unreasonable temper of the young man was so subdued that his sobriquet of "Spunky" was falling into disuse amongst the old stock, and was not at all adopted by the new comers who could not see its application. The patient affection that cared for the little Belle, and found such keen delight in her baby love, was magically smoothing out the capriciousness in his frank young nature, and teaching him the beautiful lesson of forbearance and consideration.

She was growing a great girl, almost three years old they supposed, and she could talk with such a sweet childish lisp of all manner of things, displaying such bright perceptive intelligence as fairly to dazzle her admiring listeners.

"She's done us both good, Billy," said Brown Jim one winter night, as they sat together smoking.

She no longer swung in a cradle, but lay tucked up in a cot bed in the corner, dimpled and rosy in her beautiful sleep.

Billy assented to the proposition on general grounds.

"She's a darling," he said, "and she keeps every one laughing with her funny little ways."

"But what I mean this," pursued his partner, gravely, "you're a sight better tempered, Billy, since you took charge of her. Yet amiable in her ways—whereas ye used to be pretty fiery."

Billy face flushed slightly, as if in proof that he was not all extinct, but he laughed good-humoredly the next moment. "Well," he confessed, "maybe I have some streaks of temper, but I don't know, people are generally what circumstances make them. I was unfortunate in mine."

"So I've heard you say before," said the old man seriously, and with great kindness of manner. "I don't want to stir up bygones, my dear boy—and I hope ye know that it isn't my way to rile smooth water for nothing; but I want to ask ye, if it wasn't yer own faults that made them circumstances?"

"No, certainly not," answered Billy, with a quick flash in his eye, and an excited tone to his voice; "I have been bitterly ill-used, by those who have lived to rue it."

"They'll live to be proud of you, Billy, that's what ye mean, isn't it? Goals of fire, ye know, Billy, that's the only revenge that's according to Scripture."

"It's according to Scripture that those who have striven to ruin and prevent the well-being and happiness of a life they should have blessed should meet with their reward, and they'll find it yet." His eyes flashed as he spoke, and his voice was shrill with anger.

"Brown Jim" laid his hand on his arm.



SAVED FROM A TERRIBLE DEATH.

"I'm a most old enough to be yer been father," said he, "listen to me as if I was, for I've a tender feelin' for ye, my boy. Now ye know where ye was and what ye were up to when I met ye in that saloon in Sacramento. What driv ye to gambling and drinking in a way that never belonged to a nature like yours to do?"

"I was not myself," stammered the young man, looking abashed at the recollection. "I—I—had rather not go back to that time."

"And ye never will, Billy, for ye didn't appear to advantage then, and that's the truth. Now, I'm not asking ye to tell me yer story, it's an empty life that hasn't some quiet corner that must not be disturbed, and yours may remain sacred forever—all I ask is, wasn't the circumstances something like the ones I dragged you out of by main force the night I found ye in a dirk fight with the Greasers?"

Billy shifted his position, and laying his hands on the table, glanced uneasily at his companion's face, and then looked into the fire. He bit his lip and colored, while he tried to speak.

"Why you know, partner, that there are no drunken Mexicans in the state of New York," he said evasively. "All the trouble of my life began there, and when you met me I was trying to go to the dogs in the quickest and worst way I could find. That was passion, I've got over that. I am calm and reasonable, thanks to you who are the only one on earth I owe kindness or respect to."

"Yer wrong there, Billy; honor thy father and thy mother—according to Scripture. Ye'd lost your way somehow a good while afore I met yer. I respect ye as a partner, and I yearn to ye as if ye was my own flesh and blood, but still I feel that yer a little mite wrong somehow, and oh, Billy, my boy, I do wish ye was right."

Suddenly Billy choked up—a great sob seemed to hang crosswise in his throat and smother his voice.

"There was a girl at the bottom of it all," he muttered, and his face blazed scarlet.

"Of course there was," echoed "Brown Jim," and his own swarthy countenance glowed like a sudden flash of red on a brown autumn leaf.

"It was my own people who struck the blow," the boy went on, with an angry gleam re-awakening in his eye. "She was willing, but my parents raised trouble between us on account of an absurd idea they took into their heads about a barrier to our union. They made her give me up. Yes it was they, who should have loved me, that cursed me. Honor them! By heavens, I hope to see them!"

"Of course ye do," interposed "Brown Jim" hastily, "and so do I, though I don't even know their names, jest because I love their son Billy, a full-blooded chap with a big heart, but a hating hot temper that steams up and blinds his judgment sometimes."

Tense checked—for the elder man had actually laid his hand upon the excited lips that would have uttered wrathful words—the young prodigal who had left his home in utterance of soul sank into silence, and brooded over the past.

Their voices in speaking had been more than usually loud, and that of the younger man had rung shrilly through the air. The great blue eyes in the cot opened wide and wondered at the sound. Now in the stillness that followed, the spoiled baby slipped from her bed, and stealing across the floor came and laid her curly head upon "Brown Jim's" bosom. Scarcely noticing the strangeness of the incident, he raised her in his

arms, and pressing her to his breast covered the pretty white night-dress which was part of the Stockton-bought wardrobe with his great woollen sleeves.

"Billy," said he in a low, sad tone, "ye've knowed trouble, I see, and its fresh on yer mind still. That's the way with them cusses, for awhile they act like a sort of cancer, and they eat up every joy or pleasure there is in life; but by-and-by they fall into a kind of dust that chokes ye up a bit, and takes the freshness out of things, but don't spile yer taste and sight and feelin' like the first blow. I knowed a man that lived through 'em all, and he'd tell ye to hope and trust in the Lord always, according to Scripture. Billy, if he was here—"

The child on his lap put up a pair of soft, rosy hands, and stroked his face; he kissed them noiselessly as they flitted over his mouth and went on:

"This here man was a rough; one of the kind that was born coarse in the grain, and hard to be smoothed into shape. He knowed it, and feeling that he wa'n't made to shine, took to wandering ways naturally, seeing that he couldn't never hope to amount to much at home. Well, while he went sailing here by sea, and journeying there on land, most of his folks died, and when he come back a full grown man there wa'n't many that knowed much about him. I don't know as I can tell ye what kind of chap this man was inwardly, for he wa'n't given to studyin' up his own feelin's much, and didn't understand 'em as a general thing till they made themselves known to him. So it happened that he'd never thought nothing at all about falling in love, or picturin' what kinder young woman he'd fancy, till his eyes fell on her suddenly, and the thing was done. She was a little girl, far too young and pretty for him."

Here "Brown Jim" passed, and looking steadily down on the little head of pale gold piled up in shiny waves upon his bosom, seemed to struggle hard to swallow some strange passion awakened by the memory of another man's love.

"She was sort of left in his hands, being the 'dopted child of an older brother who had died. She had no one to turn to but him; she was desolate and friendless, without a home or any way of getting one. This here man wa'n't poor, mind ye; he'd plenty to buy her all she could desire, and that kinder give him courage to ask her to be his wife. She was such a clinging little thing, and felt her loss so much that she was glad to turn to any one, so she turned to him; but the man thought it was love; being a stupid chap, he took her at her word and went straight up to heaven in his great joy. He stayed there nigh about a year, and come to think of it, Billy, he ha'n't no reason to repine, though he lived in infernal torture for many another. Ye see, 'tain't every one as has a whole year of heaven in their lives, and this man's was pure bliss. He might have seen through the poor child's feelin's if he hadn't been sorter blinded by the light of his own joy; he might have even guessed the truth if he'd once felt the least doubtful, but he wa'n't. So he went on till that wonderful year was over, and he had to go to Mexico about some property that was in danger and he couldn't bear to lose, seeing how lovely his feathers made his pretty bird. There he took the cholera and was brought nigh unto death, but in spite of his torments he thought of her, and made a will that left her everything, and putting it to the Consul's all regular, 'cording to law. That was all he knowed for a time; after a big struggle in his heart to say good-by to her, he lay still and the torture was past."

"When he came back again to life there was a couple of Greaser women a robbing him, and his flats was cracking as if they was bein' thawed out of ice. Poor souls, they thought they'd done a big thing for him to bring him back from the jaws of death; but there was a time when he could have cursed 'em for not letting the greaves swallow him. It was a long while afore he could stand on his legs, and a still longer one before he could start on his journey home. His head was kinder weak and muddled; none of his thoughts were clear, except that he had been brought back to life after he'd ceased to belong to it. He realized that the poor child at home would have a fearful shock, and he trembled and turned deadly cold with the thought of the joy that must follow when he appeared before her alive and well once more."

"Brown Jim" stopped speaking, and passed his hand nervously over his face and forehead; he moved uneasily in his chair and coughed a dry and husky cough, while his companion changed color and seemed no less perturbed by the recital.

"I hadn't oughter set out to tell this," said the miner; "it's a worryin' sorter story, and I'll cut it short. He started home, but didn't get there; he was called back to Mexico before he reached New Orleans about some few business that promised to close every day, but span itself out for months. Finally he got clear and made for New York. I'd oughter told ye that his wife had a sister pretty near her own age that was living down east. Ye see there was a pair of orphans left, and when his brother took one, a Boston man took the other, and they hadn't met in years. When the poor wretch came crawling back from his grave, as ye may say, he found his wife was in Boston, staying with this sister, who was but lately married, as he heard. He made himself down to no living soul, but followed her there, and being kinder hungry for a sight of her, peeped about to git a look through the windows before he should sorter break the strange tidings of his coming back by degrees. It was a pretty place, a cottage in Roxbury, with a porch and long windows hung with vines. It was the summer time, and there was but little light in the parlor; but the poor chap was all eyes, and he caught a glimpse of her as he turned the street corner and came in view of the house."

He saw his wife, and not content with that, he caught near her too. She had a sweet voice, and it never sounded sweeter than it did that night as she spoke in a quiet, cheerful way of little things her sister brought to mind. All at once the woman said, "You are too young and pretty to be a widow always, and young Ferris is a handsome fellow!"

Billy gave a sharp cry, like the sound that one would make who saw a heavy weight about to descend and crush him, then caught himself in the utterance and bit his lips fiercely.

"But the man never said a word," said Brown Jim; "he listened and heard it all, but never spoke. He heard the very life of his soul say she was sorry that he was dead, but knew he must be happier away from a poor young thing that suited him as ill as

she did—that she knew he was good and true, and so she had tried to forget his looks and ways, and like him for the sake of the kindness he showed her. She wiped away just such tears as he had once shed in playful pettishness, and said calmly, 'No matter how much I love Ferris, I shall never forget poor Jim.' These was flooring words, Billy, but they lifted this miserable chap right up. He stood where he could have put his hand in through the curtains and given things and laid it right on her head, but he never made a motion; he looked in steady for he knowed he was taking a last eternal farewell. 'She's my wife yet in the law, but she's give the heart I never had to another man, and for the death I've died for her there ain't no earthly resurrection!' and he writ out in his own soul with his heart's hottest blood an act of divorcement, and he said, 'She is free.' The heavens above seemed to come together with a crash as he turned away, and in the great empty, desolate world he longed most for a grave down on the place where they'd buried the boys that died of cholera in Mexico. Billy, my dear boy, ye see this little blossom that's dropped off into her innocent baby sleep on my breast, well you and her in the only thing I care for in the world. That's why I've told you this story, though I can't see my own meanin' as clearly now as when I began; maybe I don't feel equal to paintin' its moral. It's late autumn with me now, but I ain't without some sunlight. These little curls, and he ran his hand fingers gently and tenderly through the golden threads, "have brought more shine on 'em into my heart than I thought could ever find itself in such a rusty place."

No word did the listener to this disjointed story vouchsafe in reply; he was naturally a frank and free-spoken youth, now he seemed to shrink out of sight and into silence. His companion did not head the changed mood into which he had fallen. He calmly and tippled across the floor with his lithe body, laying it carefully in its forsaken bed, and patting the glowing cheek to rest as he gathered the clothes around the nestling form.

Suddenly Billy broke out in a hoarse voice with a distressed and almost distorted look of eagerness for the reply.

"You said you come from St. Louis, and belonged altogether to the west and south-west. Did—did you—I mean, was that your home?"

Brown Jim answered without looking up, still bending over and watching the pretty little Belle.

"Oh, I'm a kinder Ishmael. I've been everywhere, and I never was contented to stay in any one place so long before. Do ye know, Billy, I think I'll lay my bones among the red-woods on the hill there. It's a pretty place enough, and right near the good old river that's been real generous to me. I'm glad of it now for little Belle's sake."

That was all he said that night, and poor Billy seemed to no wise inclined to draw him out of his silence. He rose and went out into the cold damp night air and stayed so long abroad that his partner stretched himself upon his blankets and lay wondering what he found so attractive under the dark and cloudy sky.

From that night forward the young man was changed in looks and manner, and seemed like one who was partially deranged, much to the astonishment and concern of his partner.

He was not only silent but distant and moody. When spoken to he would spring up as if he had received a sudden blow, and he avoided his old friend as much as he had before outlived his society and confidence. One thing was particularly observable, he would not sit down to eat with him or share the twilight hour of play and frolic with the little Belle. Billy, however, not that his manner evinced anger or dislike, on the contrary he would occasionally dart a look towards the thoughtful miner full of self-reproach and agonized entreaty that would fade into a mysterious mingling of shameful anxiety and distress. He was no longer himself in any way, not even when he fondled the child for whom his love seemed unabated. He would hide his face in her bosom, and turn away from all observation to give way to affection his every glance at her he spoke. He took to carrying her off into the red-woods where he would walk hour after hour like a tireless sentry with the little one in his arms long after she had fallen asleep there.

"What's wrong with the poor lad?" murmured "Brown Jim" to himself sadly, "his troubles has took a fresh start and makes him kind o' wild, and what's worse he seems to feel some sort of guilt of me."

Strange to tell this odd state of affairs not only continued but increased, and Billy ceased to take an interest even in that most exciting subject rich paying dirt. The winter was a mild one, with few storms, and the miners were able to work almost every day. Billy neglected his claims, and the men he now employed to dig for him had it all their own way. "Brown Jim" remonstrated with him.

"I don't ask ye what's up," he said with friendly earnestness, "but yer a young man with the world before ye, why should ye want to go against yer good fortune, and upset yer own luck?"

Billy listened respectfully, as he always did when his partner spoke, but he offered no reply beyond a muttered, "It didn't matter much how things went."

It was a day or two after this unsatisfac-

they conference that they both happened to go into a sort of store or general exchange agency but lately established on the Bar. "Brown Jim" wanted to send down to the coast, and the other, who was the proprietor, was just looking for a man to go down to the coast. The younger man left the shop and made way for his partner with an abashed air, not stopping to hear the clerk's answer to his question.

"Brown Jim" looked at him earnestly. "Am you looking for any one, Billy?" he asked. His voice was sorrowful, and his manner almost timid, as he looked at his estranged companion with a curious expression of saddened interest.

"Looking for any one?" echoed Billy, moving hastily away.

"I mean from the States, ye know, ye were asking about the steamer, I thought."

"Here's a letter for you, anyhow," said a fellow-miner who had been glancing over the list. "Yes, Billy, here's a letter for you as sure as you're born."

"Where?" cried the young man excitedly, his face flushing eagerly. "How do you know my name?" "Give it to me, I say," he snatched it from the clerk's hand, who laughed as he read the old superscription.

"Spunky Billy, at Brown Jim's Bar, Mokuloune."

"Well, that's a direction for you," he said merrily.

"It's from Evergreen, and he knew no other," exclaimed Billy, apparently intensely relieved that his friend's ignorance was as great as it was. "It's partly to you, sir," and he turned towards his partner without looking at him; "we'd better go up to the cabin."

So they went, and there the younger man read the epistle aloud, while the little Indian boy had trained into submergence and general house-servant cooked the supper and played with Belle.

It was from Cambridge the young man wrote, and he apologized in the beginning for knowing no better name by which to address his late acquaintance. If it had not been for the absurdity of directing a letter to the ridiculous titles they had known each other by, he should have written to them long ago, but now he felt the necessity of communicating something that had just come to his knowledge concerning the parentage of little Belle.

At a house in Boston, where he had been lately introduced as a visitor, he saw a picture of a baby so like the little one he had left behind at the Bar, that he was impelled to ask the lady of the house whose child it was that bore so strange a resemblance to their little Belle. The inquiry made her sorrowful, and with much feeling she related the circumstances which Evergreen proceeded to repeat, adding that he was so well convinced that the little Minnie of his friend's story and the child they had rescued from the Makuloune were one and the same, that he had assured the poor lady, and begged his late companion to aid him in restoring the dear little creature to her relative's arms.

The lady friend, about whom he maintained a little bashful ceremony in every mention, had a sister married to a sea captain who sailed to California by the way of Cape Horn early in 1851. Finding such promise of fortune as dazzled almost all the early arrivals, he had sold his ship and gone up into the mine, writing to his wife and glowing accounts of the wealth which the soil seemed, that she felt they would soon be amply repaid for the separation by the success he was certain to meet with. Another letter or two in the next few months equally glowing, and then the correspondence stopped, and for nearly a year she had remained in such distraction and suspense that she was eager to put an end to it by joining a family agent to sail for San Francisco, and with her little girl, the sweet little Minnie, whose picture attracted the young man's attention, the search for her husband that ended so disastrously. The late captain's story was a tale common to half the miners who have dug California soil—elated at first into extravagant hopes, disappointment reduced him to the deepest despair. From the wildest expectations of success he soon sank into nerveless dejection, and finally preferred silence to a confession of his failure, not calculating on the fears it would create at home. After passing from one grade of wretched existence to another, he was glad to ship home as an inferior officer, where he arrived a few months after his wife had sailed in search of him. All the inquiries he had made in frantic self accusation brought him no other explanation of her loss, than that she had left the friends she accompanied to San Francisco and gone up to the mines to find an old mining partner of her husband's. The terrible flood of that heavy winter set in very shortly afterwards, and she was never seen.

"Now," said Evergreen, "was not this poor lady and the one that we laid in the little grove of red-woods one and the same person? Her poor sister, and the unhappy husband for whose loss she lost her life, are peacefully excited at the thought, and I have gained my uncle's permission to carry out the plan of returning the child to her eager relatives."

"Brown Jim" groaned. "The boy's turned a fool," said he angrily; "that kind of writin' don't sound like him now. This child ain't in need of no relatives while she has us, is she, Billy?"

He caught up the little sunbeam who was sitting about in her busy play and strained her to his breast with a troubled and almost suffocated air.

"Ye're all right, ain't ye, my little queen?" he asked with trembling fondness. "Ye love old Uncle Jim, don't ye, my sunny-haired birdie?"

The struggling little one, who half resented so unceremonious an interruption of her play, gave him a hasty round of kisses on each cheek and half buried herself in his bosom in an energetic embrace. Then she vigorously disengaged herself and ran back to her baby-house on a box in the corner, where she was cooking a bit of dried apple and three white beans for Pookie the Indian boy.

Billy said not a word but went on reading, when his partner again turned his face towards him.

"A journey can be accomplished in three months, which will include our vacation here. My uncle approves of my making it under the circumstances, (these words were underlined) and I need not try to express to you the joy with which I shall greet my dear old friend once more."

"Truly and affectionately yours,"

"EDGAR IRVING."

"Edgar Irving!" echoed "Brown Jim" in blank amazement. "Who's he?"

Billy, thus called upon, answered:

"I know old 'Granite's' name was Irving, for he had a letter or two directed to him here."

But "Brown Jim" would receive no explanation of the subject. He was strongly and unconsciously repelled and excited. "He's gone and turned out a fool, ye see," he said, striding about the cabin excitedly. "That there child's as much ours as if she'd been born to us both. She's ours 'ording to Scripture, Billy, and I leave it would stand in law too. You saved her up as much as even Pookie's daughter fished up Moses, and she kept him in spite of his folks. If you'll stick to it they can't get her away from us. Her mother's buried up in the red-woods, and her spirit's a lingerin' round the spot. Her father was a likely kind o' man, or he'd never left the mine dead broke. Consarn that fool Evergreen. The Lord forgive me for swearin'. Amen."

His companion watched him with troubled interest, and cast looks of strangely mingled feeling furtively upon him.

By-and-by the sturdy figure began to shake, and a deep groan that seemed to rend the heart came from the miner's explanation of the possible danger of "Evergreen's" party, deeply interested.

It was needless alarm, as it seemed when they came in sight of the three riders about a mile below the Bar, their outlines dimly discernible in the dusk of evening. They came along gayly, the lady riding between. It was cool weather, and all California even-ings are fresh and breezy; so she wore a gay scarf wound round her figure over her riding-dress, and her plumed hat drew close over her face.

"There's 'Evergreen' at the right—I know him in spite of his fine clothes," said "Brown Jim," and his voice trembled a little at the recognition; for he had liked the young man sincerely, despite his late wrath at his untoward discovery.

The next minute the miner clutched his partner's arm, and uttered a suppressed scream.

"Don't be know that the river runs up into that little canon there he's coming to; or does the blind fool mean to ride straight into it?"

They stood still as if rooted to the spot, talking eagerly, and never once glancing towards the spell-bound miners, or the narrow gorge they were approaching.

"Hold up!" yelled "Brown Jim," suddenly finding voice, and shouting in his uncontrolled terror, the broad back echoed. The chasm before them was but a few feet in width, but the mountain springs had broken through and tunneled into a deep ravine; while branching off the old road, thus rendered impassable, was a new one out in the shelving bank higher up, but in the dim light rendered indistinct save to accustomed eyes.

The elder miner was strong and lithe as a panther; with a running leap he bounded down the road over the canon, and had caught the bridle of the rearing horse on which the lady sat, just as "Evergreen" started, and he had thrown him, and he rolled over backwards down the soft bank of shelving earth towards the river.

"Take her off," screamed "Brown Jim" to the distracted Captain, who was madly pulling on the sharp bit in his horse's mouth, and causing the foaming beast to rise on his haunches, "get her foot out of the stirrup. Back ye born devil, back!"

This last cry was uttered as the fiery Bonito rose in the air, flinging his hoofs wildly, and scotching in infuriated fright; the woman clung feebly to his flying mane, but her little hands seemed nerveless with terror, and her companion was too fully absorbed in his own alarm and distress to aid her.

The horse, rendered desperate by the iron hold of the miner on his bit, reared and sprang, almost lifting the heavy man from the earth, in its mad strength.

"I'll manage him," but you must ride off, for I can't help ye," cried "Brown Jim" to the terrified woman, but before she could take the meaning of his words, Billy's arm was round her, and she fell back senseless in his grasp.

Then the miner relaxed his strained hold on the frantic Bonito, but it was too late, for his hand was twisted in the bridle he had first caught; the horse slipped on the wet earth and crumbling rocks, struggled to regain his footing, plunged, slipped again, and rolled over and over with the crumpled man till it reached the rocky bottom of the stream below, and there they lay quite still.

"There's been trouble down the road, boys, and 'Brown Jim's' had an awful fall," cried a frightened young miner, rushing in upon a newly-started game of old sledge in one of the cabins. "They're carrying him and a woman up the hill, and Billy's nearly mad, for he thinks the dear old fellow's done for."

The cards were flung better skelter wherever they chanced to fall, and the players hurried breathlessly to the now surrounded cabin into which the long, gaunt figure of his owner was being borne, with the light of a dozen lanterns flashing on his white, composed face.

They laid him on his blankets, and when one of them was about to ride off to the next camp for a doctor, he tried to stay him. His voice was very faint, but sustained and audible. "Don't let him go, boys," he said; "it's no use, I've got the hurt there's no cure for, and I'm bound to go, trustin' in the Lord 'ording to Scripture."

A man came and threw himself beside him on the floor, and crying out that he loved him, and would gladly die with him, laid his head on the woollen-shirted breast that heaved painfully, and kissed and clung to it as if there were not a witness in the cabin to lock upon his grief.

No critic's eye marked it; those who saw it through their own tears called it neither foolish nor unmanly in Billy to bewail the glancing eye and fading breath of the man they all loved and honored. "Brown Jim," no longer dark but blanched to deadly pallor, lay smiling in his death throes, for coarse and unlovely as he seemed, his heart was full of sensitive tenderness; that drank in affection, and revelled in the draught.

"There's my baby?" he murmured softly. They brought the weeping, frightened little creature to his side, and lifting his powerless arm, put it round her; he struggled to raise the other over Billy's shoulder, who seeing the motion held it to his heart, and coming very near the whitened lips, asked,

"Did you know whose life you gave your own to save?"

At first the eyes that answered him had no meaning; their gaze, but presently they turned towards the baby's cot, where they had laid the half-unconscious woman. She

but thinking of the pretty little creature took it out of my mind. They stopped at 'Whiskey Dick's,' and he gave me a horse; they was the best he had, no doubt, but I don't know if it's worth the price. I'm kinder fearful about that pretty little one, if she mean that old fellow, the one you see showed off last night, and as sure as you're born, that's the one 'Whiskey Dick' told her she could have."

"Whiskey Dick's a fool, and the woman will be killed," cried "Brown Jim," jumping up impatiently, and rubbing out of his eyes. "When did they start?" he asked, stopping as he reached the turn time demanded the river view. "There's no danger on the lower ledge, but when they come to the gulches, it will be all over with 'em. They don't understand horses; Evergreen never know'd which side to mount even—and the Captain ain't likely to be much better. Come, Billy, let's go down the road a piece; we may save trouble—and I can't sit still here a twinklin' of it."

The younger man did not share his comrade's excitement, but he nevertheless obeyed instantly, and starting down the open road, they were soon joined by a half-dozen loungers, whose was the miner's explanation of the possible danger of "Evergreen's" party, deeply interested.

It was needless alarm, as it seemed when they came in sight of the three riders about a mile below the Bar, their outlines dimly discernible in the dusk of evening. They came along gayly, the lady riding between. It was cool weather, and all California even-ings are fresh and breezy; so she wore a gay scarf wound round her figure over her riding-dress, and her plumed hat drew close over her face.

"There's 'Evergreen' at the right—I know him in spite of his fine clothes," said "Brown Jim," and his voice trembled a little at the recognition; for he had liked the young man sincerely, despite his late wrath at his untoward discovery.

The next minute the miner clutched his partner's arm, and uttered a suppressed scream.

"Don't be know that the river runs up into that little canon there he's coming to; or does the blind fool mean to ride straight into it?"

They stood still as if rooted to the spot, talking eagerly, and never once glancing towards the spell-bound miners, or the narrow gorge they were approaching.

"Hold up!" yelled "Brown Jim," suddenly finding voice, and shouting in his uncontrolled terror, the broad back echoed. The chasm before them was but a few feet in width, but the mountain springs had broken through and tunneled into a deep ravine; while branching off the old road, thus rendered impassable, was a new one out in the shelving bank higher up, but in the dim light rendered indistinct save to accustomed eyes.

The elder miner was strong and lithe as a panther; with a running leap he bounded down the road over the canon, and had caught the bridle of the rearing horse on which the lady sat, just as "Evergreen" started, and he had thrown him, and he rolled over backwards down the soft bank of shelving earth towards the river.

"Take her off," screamed "Brown Jim" to the distracted Captain, who was madly pulling on the sharp bit in his horse's mouth, and causing the foaming beast to rise on his haunches, "get her foot out of the stirrup. Back ye born devil, back!"

This last cry was uttered as the fiery Bonito rose in the air, flinging his hoofs wildly, and scotching in infuriated fright; the woman clung feebly to his flying mane, but her little hands seemed nerveless with terror, and her companion was too fully absorbed in his own alarm and distress to aid her.

The horse, rendered desperate by the iron hold of the miner on his bit, reared and sprang, almost lifting the heavy man from the earth, in its mad strength.

"I'll manage him," but you must ride off, for I can't help ye," cried "Brown Jim" to the terrified woman, but before she could take the meaning of his words, Billy's arm was round her, and she fell back senseless in his grasp.

Then the miner relaxed his strained hold on the frantic Bonito, but it was too late, for his hand was twisted in the bridle he had first caught; the horse slipped on the wet earth and crumbling rocks, struggled to regain his footing, plunged, slipped again, and rolled over and over with the crumpled man till it reached the rocky bottom of the stream below, and there they lay quite still.

"There's been trouble down the road, boys, and 'Brown Jim's' had an awful fall," cried a frightened young miner, rushing in upon a newly-started game of old sledge in one of the cabins. "They're carrying him and a woman up the hill, and Billy's nearly mad, for he thinks the dear old fellow's done for."

The cards were flung better skelter wherever they chanced to fall, and the players hurried breathlessly to the now surrounded cabin into which the long, gaunt figure of his owner was being borne, with the light of a dozen lanterns flashing on his white, composed face.

They laid him on his blankets, and when one of them was about to ride off to the next camp for a doctor, he tried to stay him. His voice was very faint, but sustained and audible. "Don't let him go, boys," he said; "it's no use, I've got the hurt there's no cure for, and I'm bound to go, trustin' in the Lord 'ording to Scripture."

A man came and threw himself beside him on the floor, and crying out that he loved him, and would gladly die with him, laid his head on the woollen-shirted breast that heaved painfully, and kissed and clung to it as if there were not a witness in the cabin to lock upon his grief.

No critic's eye marked it; those who saw it through their own tears called it neither foolish nor unmanly in Billy to bewail the glancing eye and fading breath of the man they all loved and honored. "Brown Jim," no longer dark but blanched to deadly pallor, lay smiling in his death throes, for coarse and unlovely as he seemed, his heart was full of sensitive tenderness; that drank in affection, and revelled in the draught.

"There's my baby?" he murmured softly. They brought the weeping, frightened little creature to his side, and lifting his powerless arm, put it round her; he struggled to raise the other over Billy's shoulder, who seeing the motion held it to his heart, and coming very near the whitened lips, asked,

"Did you know whose life you gave your own to save?"

At first the eyes that answered him had no meaning; their gaze, but presently they turned towards the baby's cot, where they had laid the half-unconscious woman. She

was coming to her senses now, and "Evergreen," whose fall had scarcely braced him on the soft earth he had rolled over, begged them to stand back and give him air, and hung about her with nervous and tremulous bodies, each endeavoring to get the other's place, and pushed the other, and ordered her back from her face. She was fair and lovely, with a sweet, tender, trusting face, and a look of child-like, appealing helplessness. The miners moved about to give her room, and another aimed, troubled eyes fell suddenly upon the dying man, whose gaze, like a flame that leaps up when it goes out for ever, turned into her almost.

"My God—James Barrett, are you come back from the grave!" She gave a frightened scream, and hid her face, shuddering, as she said the words; but the miner, struggling, tried to raise himself more towards her.

"I'm going there," he gasped faintly. "Let me—let me touch my wife!"

No one dared to move, but the startled woman, trembling and shivering, sank upon her knees, and crept towards him.

He looked upon her with eyes whose blinding splendor overpowered his face, and made it beautiful.

"Are ye mine, my darling?" he whispered, his voice was almost gone.

"Oh, Jim, I've mourned for you, I have, I have," was all she could say.

"There's nothing to stand between us now—and I'm half-way to Heaven. Under the red-woods, Billy, ye know. It's the fall of the year for me, but there's light yet—dust to dust, but in the hope of the life everlasting—'ording to Scripture."

Billy caught the falling head, and bowed his face above it, while "Evergreen" lifted the terrified widow and the sobbing child and led them away to comfort them.

The next evening, at sundown, after the fashion of quick burials in California, the miners in solemn array, bore the cuffed form of their honored companion up the hillside to rest under the shade of his favorite red-woods, and a group of sorrowful faces bent above the open grave as the first full light of the morning came.

His widow was too ill to follow in the train, but his late partner was so sincere a mourner, that he and the little child, whose hand he held, could scarcely be drawn away from the clay mound they heaped above him.

"It's a good place for the dear old boy," said "Tunnel Bob," one of the few old friends remaining on the Bar, "you know he loved the river, and said he should never want to be out of sight of it. You can come here often, Billy, and it'll seem as if you were sitting beside him. There's nothing lost for him, you know, for he's gone to incorruptible riches, being a good and faithful servant, and an honest miner."

Billy was silent, but he wrung the homely sympathizer's hand, and intimated by a motion that he would stay and walk there awhile. In truth it seemed the only place left for him in the world; and being there almost always, it was not strange that he should two days after meet the pretty woman whose coming had been so tragic in its effect.

She hurried past him and knelt beside her husband's grave to take a last farewell, for having proven little Belle to be her sister's child, the party were to return the way they came, taking with them the property the dead miner bequeathed his foster daughter.

The young man moved aside coldly and turned to go, but the widow, rising with hurried haste, intercepted him.

"Do not look at me as if you were my enemy, Mr. Ferris," she said, pleadingly. "I know it is better to say nothing of the past. Your friends were right and we were foolish, and—and it was a great mistake. I have been so terribly shocked by my husband's death, that although I believed him dead years ago, it is a new and bitter grief. You are an old and valued friend of his and Edgar's too, and I hope you will forgive, that I, not feel—Oh, Mr. Ferris, forget the past, and please don't make me feel that you think harshly of me."

She looked at him with kind, gentle eyes, full of tears and very winning. But he was a bitter-hearted youth, whose own wrongs and the sorrow he felt for the dead blunted the beams of her fascinations, so he said cruelly:

"You are not worth one thought of the great heart that lies mouldering here, and your presence is a mockery of the dead."

She cried piteously, and called him harsh and unkind; then she stooped and kissed the earth, and gathered a tuft of grass to take away and treasure in memory of her husband. But in her busy thoughts she argued secretly that he was fiery and unreasonable to blame her, which poor Jim never would have done, and that Edgar was more refined and elegant than he, after all.

She proved her constancy to this last decision by marrying him some six months afterwards, as William Ferris heard, and laughed bitterly in hearing. "For," said he, "if it hadn't been for my youth and father and mother, she would have been my wife in New York, after I had met her by chance at the poor sister's James Barrett helped to bury without my seeing. It's an empty, foolish story, and if it were not for the noble heart its telling broke, I should laugh at its mad folly."

Brown Jim was known as a mining camp long after its founder lay mouldering in dust; and his partner, flourishing in worldly goods, became a prosperous banker.

A pretty town, with some commercial interest, now occupies its site, and the red-wood's clump is a little cemetery, whose finest monument is a beautiful marble shaft raised in memory of James Barrett by his friend and partner, William Ferris.

SLANDER.—Even where there is real cause to expose, one should pause a while before the utterance of words which may drive the sinner to greater evil. But what shall we say of one who can tell a deliberate lie, or repeat that which conscience tells her was the fabrication of another's brain? I say her, because scandal is woman's greatest fault. I know hardly any who can refrain from promulgating a wicked story, even though alive is added to the conscience by a "I don't believe it, poor thing."

Mr. Walter Scott's wife expressed herself with regard to her husband's indiscretions, by remarking that she saw no difference between Abbotsford and a large hotel, except that at the former nobody paid.

A Wisconsin lover wrote his sweetheart: "There is not a globe of blood in my heart that does not bear your photograph."

"It is a poor rule that won't work both ways," exclaimed the boy, as he threw the female at the school-master's head.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1871.

Notice.—We have no connection with, nor any personal knowledge of, a person calling himself "The Philadelphia Evening Post," and pretending to be the owner of the "Post" in New York. It is to be feared that some person has no connection with either the Philadelphia or New York "Post," and is attempting to pass himself off as the owner of both.

"The Cock of the Walk."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

It is really amusing, were it not so aggravating, to see the same most men put on, such after their own different fashions, over the fact that they are the providers, and the women dependent upon them. After forcing womanhood to this abject position, from which the independence of her personality revolts, not only by custom and religion, but in a measure by law also, they crow over the fact of their lordly prerogative as though it were the most disinterested thing in creation.

Gentle reader, especially my country reader, have you ever noticed the fowls in your barn-yard? Behold the cock, when his scratching has been crowned with success and he had a choice morsel, how he calls to the hens with his coaxing cluck, and they flock around him to receive his bounty; all this is very nice, were it to end here; but alas! with true masculine egotism, as he turns away he publishes the fact in an exultant crow that forbids all modest people from admiring him as much as he does.

Oh, then sleek and glossy cock of the human family! it is very kind of you to work day after day to feed and clothe us; "good-for-nothing woman," who does nothing in return but play at housekeeping, cooking, sewing and washing too, perhaps also make-believe mother, nurse and teacher to your children to fill up the odd moments.

It is likewise very kind of you to give up your seat in the cars and coaches for her; to let her drink first at the fountain; and to raise your hat to her when you meet her in the street; for which irksome attentions she repays you only by the small consolation of the civilizing influence of her presence among you, and her gentle ministrations in the time of your sickness and trouble.

All this is very kind, I say, but pray, kind air, do not crow so loud about it, for turn to the barn-yard again and learn your lesson; just hear the eager, clucking tumult of the hens as they fly to receive the largesse of their protector! Does it not seem to you that the fact of his generosity has been sufficiently proclaimed without the greatest of his egotistical crows? Dear air, as I said before, do not crow so loud; for alas! with your tumult you have not only drowned the notes of the gentle clucking at your side, but, outraged by your boasting, the disposition that prompted it has been well-nigh strangled at its birth.

In the days of our grandmothers the bad end of the crowing hen might well be a subject of sure prophecy, since the prophet herself had condemned the unfortunate hen to the pot the moment she heard her crow; but oh! ye fowls of the human barn-yard! when ye set the example and the hens among you crow, ye dare not cast her scorn so darkly in this enlightened age, since in that case all history would prove you false prophets. For, alas for your theory, the crowing hens among you are the very ones who have the best time while they live, and the most honor when they die. If their crowing is disagreeable to you then, there is but one way that I know of whereby you may safely hinder it—cluck to them, and they will cluck to you.

MOUSE-IN-THE-CORNER.

Result of Speculation.

Stubbs had been away from his native town a good many years. He returned with streaks of silver in his hair, deep furrows upon his brow, and a stoop in his shoulders. Upon the first favorable opportunity we called to see him, for he had been our schoolmate and playfellow in other times. We found him sitting by his table, in a thoughtful mood, with his right hand resting upon a large, well-worn pocket-book. Cordial greetings, unexpressed, and he was lapsed again into a reflective mood.

"Doesn't it seem good to get back to the old place once more?" we at length ventured.

"Yes," said he.

We had hoped he had done well during his absence. He looked up, and faintly smiled.

"All that I have gained," said he, "I shall leave to my favorite nephew and heir, and it will be valuable to him if he rightly uses it."

And he laid his hand again upon the old pocket-book.

"It is in there?" we suggested.

"It is all in this pocket-book," he nodded; "but," he added, "the key to the wealth I shall put upon the outside. I had just planned to write it as you came."

"A direction for its use?" was our suggestion.

"A hint from which he might gain direction," said Stubbs. I shall fold this old book in an envelope, and upon the envelope I shall write this legend:

"The result of thirteen years' tireless wandering and speculation."

"And the book contains—"

"Nothing!"

HELMHOLD REDIVIVUS.—In correction of various rumors in circulation detrimental to Dr. Helmholtz, the latest being a report of a gunning accident at Long Branch, we are informed that the Doctor never was in better health and spirits. His prospects are bright, and are long the great advertiser will shine more brilliantly than ever. With Helmholtz, there is no such word as fail.—N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.

George W. Childs, of the Philadelphia Ledger, occupies just now the attention of the English aristocracy. On the fourth of July he spent the day with the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham, "exalted" on the throne of the Duke's Grace, and he is to spend a week with his Grace and her Grace at Stowe. On the 5th, Mr. C. and party were dined by the Lord Mayor and lady, and about this time they are the guests of Mr. Walter, of the London Times, at his great estate of Bearwood. Mr. Walter and Mr. Childs have had warm personal relations for many years.

An inconsiderate word, thoughtlessly spoken to the detriment of one's neighbor's character, may tarnish his reputation for life.

ELLINOR.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

Her eyes are blue as the violets
That bloom in the month of May,
And her cheeks are red as the western skies
At the close of a summer's day.
Her brown hair clusters around a brow
That is white as the winter's snow,
Her dainty head is small as a child's,
And her heart is as pure, I know.

Her voice is sweet as a thrush's song
On a sunny morn in June,
As she trips about at her household tasks,
Humming a tender tune.
The song she sings is a sweet love-song,
And it thrills my listening ear—
"Oh, take me to your arms, my love!"
But she doesn't think I'm near!

Let even we wander down the vale,
While the whippoorwill sang in the wood;
And I breathed in her ear a tender tale
That is easily understood.
"My darling," I said, "will you promise to come,
My life forever to bless?"
And she placed her little white hand in mine,
And tremulously answered "Yes."

I kissed her lips, while the moon looked down
From the peaceful summer sky;
The whippoorwill hushed its noisy notes,
And the wind went past with a sigh.
While back and forth 'neath the towering trees
Of maple, and oak, and fir,
I walked with the peerless girl of my choice,
My beautiful Ellinor.

PRACTICAL NOTES

FUTURE CALIFORNIA TOURISTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY A LADY.

No. 4.

Bidding adieu to the Mormon city as another beautiful sunset tinted mountain, valley and lake, we returned to Ogden, and from there took the Central Pacific road for San Francisco. During this ride you cross the great American desert, the extent of which you cannot fully appreciate until you pass over it in person. It is a perfect sea of white alkali, burning hot under the sun's rays. We closed our eyes for the night upon it to wake the next morning and find no change of scene—save the snowy peaks of the Humboldt range in the distance. All day long we rode on without seeing a shrub over three feet high, or living thing except a few little birds, two poor crows, and one wild duck. It is a long, long, dreary ride.

Like many other experiences in life, where happy moments do much to offset the memory of dreary ones, we were repaid for the tedious ride when on waking the next morning, we found ourselves near the summit of the Sierra Nevada. The sun rose from the mountains in a perfect glory of brightness; all nature was beautiful. At five o'clock we were ready to enter the observation car. How the practical necessities of life constantly array themselves in antagonism with sentiment. Here on the mountains, nature rich in beauty, our eyes craving the feast after the long fast, are annoyed by the snow-sheds that interfere with the best views, just as a covered bridge shuts out the view of the prettiest river. The winter traveler gladly welcomes their protection, but to summer tourists they are a great annoyance, as they roof in the road at some places for several miles. The grandest scene on the route is at Cape Horn. The guide book tells us—"At this point timid ladies, shuddering, draw back; one look being sufficient to unsettle their nerves." But here there were no "timid ladies" on board our train, or the usual effort failed to be produced for all eyes gazed into the "aural chaos" where 2,500 feet below us wound a river like a silver thread, while the crests of the mountains towering high above threw their shadows over the beautiful valley.

Those of my readers who have crossed the ocean, will be reminded of the preparations for entering port, as they approach their journey's end. The porter of the cars became generally active, and especially interested in your appearance. With ever flourish of his hand when removing dust, he seems to anticipate an extra "bit," as they call twenty-five cents. We were advised to keep some warm wrappings convenient, for we would require them on the boat when crossing the bay. We could scarcely realize it, as we had been waiting daily for the cool breeze that we had not found up to this time. But once on board, and we realized the comfort of feeling the sun about us. The wind blew a perfect gale, and was as cold as though from off an iceberg.

There was the usual consultations among the passengers in regard to hotels. We decided on going to "The Grand," and it proved a most agreeable decision. It equals in every respect the finest hotels at home or abroad. Our suite of rooms was prettily furnished, and after ordering a fire in our parlor, and making ourselves comfortable, we were ready to receive friends in a cozy, home-like manner. Looking on the busy world outside, we could but marvel at the appearance of this city of only twenty years growth. It is one more proof of American industry, perseverance, and general good-heartedness.

Upon a better acquaintance with the famed city where those reading here call "Frisco," I was astonished at its size and business appearance. The atmosphere is also a surprise. I soon decided they abbreviated the name, for the utterly regardless manner in which the winds frisk you about is enough to suggest it. The variety of dress is quite striking as you promenade. You will notice me help with deep fur cape, while at her side passes another with lace shawl, this velvet sequin, and again a white dress with some gauze-like covering over the shoulders. Taste alone must regulate them; it surely cannot be comfort. The winds were not disagreeable to me, but I preferred to draw myself suitable to meet them. Though the weather was like November at home, the fruits and flowers grew luxuriantly. The florists cut their plants very lavishly, cutting small beds with those more fully bloomed, and giving as many as I could carry in both

hands for twenty-five cents. Such sweet moss-roses, and so many varieties of carnation pinks. In one bouquet I counted twelve different varieties. My room was a garden of beauty. Thanks to the hotel, knowing my love for flowers kept me so beautifully supplied. In the case of fruit and vegetables, I was disappointed. On visiting the markets, we saw some large, fine specimens of both; but I told them I wanted to see such as I read of. They could not show them to me any larger than those often exhibited at our fairs; the difference being care are the exception, these there the usual growth.

The principal drive from the city is to the Seal Rocks, and the most pleasant time for the going is in the early part of the day, before eleven o'clock. The winds are not then so high. You take a carriage, go out to the Cliff House to breakfast, driving over a good road, and returning by the beach. The hotel is situated on the rocks, close by the sea. From its piazza you look over the broad Pacific. Though this was my first view of it, I seemed to welcome it as an old friend, so much did its waves dash against the rocks and roll on the sandy beach like its sister ocean Atlantic; realizing the difference only as standing on its shore you bid good-bye to old "Bul" as he sinks to rest, to receive his morning greeting as he rises from his ocean bed on the morrow from the broad Atlantic.

While breakfast is being prepared, you hear distant howling, such a peculiar sound, coming from some rocks in the distance. Then upon looking carefully, you see a vast number of seals, sunning themselves. Soon they grow restless, and they push and crowd each other off. One after another goes plunging into the ocean, while others are making vigorous efforts to procure comfortable quarters on the rocks. It is very amusing to see them. Many of them have been named after noted persons, and all are protected by the laws of the state from capture, though several persons have been permitted to catch some for exhibition in distant cities. It is very evident that this spot is a pride to the city, as our parks are to us, for the first question is, "Have you seen the seals?" It is well to be prepared to answer in the affirmative, by making this visit among the first.

I, however, acknowledge a weakness for Chloam, and felt greater interest in them and their peculiar life, than in some other matters of general interest. A gentleman friend kindly volunteered to picnic with me through Golden Gate, and knowing him to have been one of the pioneers of the new state, felt he was well fitted to provide us entertainment. I will, however, leave the result of our visit till my next, that I may not weary you.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PRINCE
TOBERKASKY'S MASQUERADE.

One touch of the golden wand of an April sunbeam and the enchanter spring had driven winter out of Russia. The ice on the Neva had at last broken from the banks, and was floating in great crystal rafts down towards Cronstadt.

I had been only a week in St. Petersburg, and I had still three months before me to do my business, and then allow me to depart. I knew hardly any one yet in the Russian capital but a Prince Toberkasky, who was just now away at Moscow, and I began to find it dull. To wander among thousands of persons speaking a language unknown to you makes you feel like a deaf man at a theatre. I went to the bank to draw £2,000, dined, and was walking up and down a passage—one of those covered arcades leading out of the great street of St. Petersburg, the Nevsky Prospekt—smoking a cigar and whiling away the time before the opera began, by studying in the shop-windows the last French and German caricatures and some photographs of Chinese and Cossack life which had just come out. All at once, as I turned on my heel, I saw a young officer in the uniform of an Austrian regiment, white and blue, look hard at me as he passed. His face was English I felt sure, but it was rather the intense sadness of it that made me look at it a second time. The next time he passed me he stopped, and in the Russian manner asked me politely in French to permit him to take a light from my cigar.

"You are surely a countryman of my own," I said.

"I am," was his reply. "And I was sure you must be English, but you see foreigners attract no attention here, we are all so cosmopolitan."

We were just then passing a cafe, and so agreed to go in there and have a talk.

"If you would like," he said, "to accept a stranger's invitation, I would ask you to come to my club on the Fontanka. It is more private there, and as you say you are new here you may like to see our club life."

I thanked him and willingly assented. He stopped at the first drosky-stand and gave the usual shout: "Davai—Ispravushchik!" Half-a-dozen droskies instantly ran up to us.

"Don't take that three-legged monster," one cried; "he'll stick in the mud; besides, that man with the gray beard has had too much vodka. He'll take you for two roubles and pack your pocket afterwards."

My new friend soon selected a man from among those wrangling applicants, and away we went.

"Nitshevoss never fear, sir," said the man who dashed off with us. "My little white pigeon knows the way. Yakh, yakh; my little pigeon will carry you till to-morrow if you like. Have a care there, old woman, or I shall drive over you. Houph!" and away we flew.

"Good-natured fellows," said my friend; "and yet not many years ago a Russian here always used to beat a driver when he wanted to go faster."

"The old ways must take time to thaw," I said.

"That a climate," said my friend, with an eagerness to talk that seemed to me almost forced, for his eyes, I observed, were itless, and his face was sallow, and worn. "A German was telling me to-day, that early in last December he threw a piece of apple peel out of his window at Moscow; it fell to the ledge of the window and remained there till a thaw in February. That was slow work, unmitigated frost. This winter has been peculiarly hard."

"There must be something strange and romantic about a winter here."

The young officer gave a sigh.

"Strange! I rather think it is. I've spent a winter here—such a winter! First the steamers stop, and one feels cut off from the sea, and hope that way; then comes the men to look to the great white stores, and

put up the double doors and windows. At 20 degrees below zero every one begins to get anxious. At 25, officers are sent round day and night to see that the sentinels and policemen do not sleep, for to sleep would be to die. At 35, all the theatres are closed, for fear the actors might be frozen on the draughty stage, or the coachmen waiting outside found dead on their boxes. At 38, ugh! all the sentinels have for cloaks given them, and no one goes out but officers and business men."

"Delightful but apocalyptic," I exclaimed.

"You must all feel like released schoolboys now."

"Yes, we do; that makes us all in such high spirits," exclaimed my companion, as he got up and shouted to the driver, "The second large house by the Romanoff bridge."

The driver turned round with a peculiar look of intelligence, and uttered his usual exclamation of "Nitshevoss, never fear, sir."

"That man is drunk," said the officer; "but he'd go on till he dropped off the box. It is the way of these fellows."

It is twenty years ago since that evening, but still I remember as vividly as if it was a picture of Canaletti, that house as we drove along the Fontanka, and dashing over a bridge, drew up at the door of a brightly-illuminated house. It was a huge palace of a place rising in that Venetian part of St. Petersburg, and its lighted windows cast golden serpentine glimmers on the dark waters of the canal. The neighboring houses were dark and silent, but from the one which we were about to enter there broke occasional shouts of laughter, and I heard a curious whirling sound that was unknown to me.

"What noise is that?" I said, to my companion, stopping with one foot on the first step of the entrance to the house.

"Oh, that is from one of our card-rooms," he said, carelessly. "Some of these rich Russian officers are fond of roulette, and like to play at it here among themselves better than at a public table."

He said this in a frank and ingenuous way, turning with a slight smile as we entered the hall to remark on the difference of English and Russian clubs.

"Is the baron here to-night?" he asked of one of the numerous footmen in the hall.

"Yes, monsieur."

"Colonel Toganoff?"

"No, sir, just come."

"M. de Rensaux and M. Carrefoix?"

"Yes, sir, they're both in the card-room."

I was struck with the young officer's melancholy expression of face more and more as we sat together in a large empty smoking-room on the first floor above the apartment in which I could hear the whirr of the roulette and the wrangling clamor of excited players. His eyes were blank and lifeless as he answered my questions in an abstracted way.

"You are thinking of England," I said; "is it long since you were there?"

"I must apologize," he said; "yes, I was rather wandering for a moment. They are slow here, to-night; will they never bring the coffee?—Yes, in the June of last year I was in England."

There were folding-doors at the end of the room where we sat. When we entered I noticed through the keyhole that the room beyond was dark, yet only a few minutes afterwards it was lighted up and some persons entered and began to play at cards.

There was a whirring, then the doors were flung open, and a little portly, smiling, red-faced man, with a close-cropped white head and spectacles, entered our room and advanced toward us.

"Ha, Courtney," said the baron (who was not unlike Cavour) in French, with a slight German accent, "how are you? Introduce me to your friend; we want you to sit in here—perhaps your friend will take a hand at whist."

I never play, as you know, till a certain regulated time after dinner. What is life without digestion, my boy. I say now, just as I used to say, what is life without love? But ever since that beautiful Livonian princess jilted me and married the old Hungarian duke I have sought my only consolation in the science of gastronomy. Our chief here will not desert me as my mistress did; no, no."

The baron was very bland, pleasant, and genial, but I thought my new friend's manner to him somewhat cold as he mechanically laughed and replied, "No, he knows his best friends too well—would you like a game of whist?" he added, turning to me;

"I see they are just beginning. I'll stay out, or go down for half an hour and watch the roulette. You'll find them nice fellows here, but keen players."

I consented with pleasure, and as once sat down. I and M. Rensaux played M. Carrefoix and Colonel Toganoff. I did not know how altogether like the men, rattling and hearty as they were, yet I hardly knew why. Rensaux was a tall, thin, keen-featured man, who looked like a lawyer; he had a brown complexion, compressed eyes, thin pinched lips, and a sardonic Voltairean smile. He approved of my playing, and manifested entire confidence in the result.

The colonel, a stout man about sixty, with drooping white moustache, and a manner full of monstrous bombast, was the perfect old miniature, frank, cordial, careless, rudely gay and sociable. M. Carrefoix was an old, bearded man, very silent, rather deaf and morose, caring for nothing but the game, and, as I soon found, intensely active to all its vicissitudes, though apparently almost sunk into imbecility.

"Extraordinary hand I had, extraordinary, ha, ha!" said the colonel, at the close of the first game. "M. Carrefoix, I did not take us all we can do, see, to beat them, but why did you lead against me, mon vieux brave? But there, I must not say anything. I dare say I made a blunder or two."

"You'd play a fair game if you would not talk so much," said the old man, preparing to deal. "Observe how quick this Englishman is—how careful! Sir," he said, turning to me, "you will be in time a first-rate player."

The second game was for a larger sum. Monsieur Rensaux and I were again partners. I was rich; I did not very much care even if I lost, the more especially as we had won the first rubber, and I felt by no means inferior in skill to my opponents. Again we won. Again we played for higher points; and this time I and M. Carrefoix were partners. Before we began, the colonel called for Champagne; the baron approving the thought as worthy of a great military genius. He was evidently the acknowledged champion of the party. One glass each, no more, and two for the bystanders. I was at home with them all by this time. The colonel shook my hand on the conclusion of the game, even although he again lost. M. Carrefoix smiled grim

approval. M. Rensaux gave me a keen look, and nodded to me as we touched glasses. The baron patted my shoulder, chuckled himself hoarse when I won the odd trick, and decided his companions on the stranger's skill.

"M. Carrefoix, condescend to praise the stranger's play. M. Carrefoix, you are an impostor! The English game is superior to ours. Rensaux, you're clearing them out—positively clearing out the Rothschild of St. Petersburg! M. Carrefoix, shall I send home for some roubles for you?—but, ah! you've got your check-book, and you'll need it; you'll need it, my friend."

I saw the bottle of champagne uncorked and every glass filled, yet I'm sure that these clever rogues, somehow or other, drugged my wine; for almost instantly that I drank it, I felt a strange effervescence and lightness in my brain, that seemed to change the character of every object and to alter the whole current of my thoughts. I was conscious that I was talking more and faster than before, and I seemed to see the whole mystery of the game with supernatural clearness. We were winning when, all at once, my partner returned a wrong card. He grumbled some malediction on himself, for that card lost us the game.

I told him so.

"You tell me how to play at whist!" he said, effervescingly—"a man of my age! I tell you it was your absurd hurry to get out your five trumps. It nearly lost you the last game, only you saved it by a blunder of Toganoff. You have held good cards, but if you had not, mon Dieu! things would have been different long ago."

"Come, we've had enough of whist," said the colonel, "when we get to recriminations. Always bear a defeat patiently. M. Carrefoix, come let us try some bets on the dice. Monsieur Anglaise, some more champagne?—yes, you must."

They brought the dice. I won the first ten minutes, then lost slightly—then won. All at once, as I turned to the great white mantel-piece for a lighted cigarette I had left there, I happened to look up in the glass and saw the colonel, with a wink at the other three men, pull some dice from his waistcoat pocket, and change them for those on the table.

"Allo!" he said, as I turned, "some more wine for our English friend."

"No," I said, "I thank you. One must keep clear in the head to study chances well. But there is no luck in these dice, curse them!"

I said this, I took one, threw it under my foot, and crushed it with my heel. It was full of quicksilver. I saw the enemies' faces change. The colonel blustered, the old man looked like a viper, the baron glared, Rensaux turned white with rage. "This is an insult—do you know that?" said the bully of the gang, the colonel, foaming up. "We must meet again about this!"

"I never fight with swindlers," I said, standing on the defensive.

"There is some mistake," said the baron, "my dear sir, let me—"

He advanced towards me to shake hands. As I held out mine, the treacherous rascal seized it, and in a moment threw his whole weight upon me. The rest crowded on—even the old man clung to my legs and urged me backward towards a narrow door I had not hitherto noticed, at the end of the apartment.

Rensaux, before I could resist, gagged me with a handkerchief, the colonel pinioned my arms, the old man held my feet, and the baron helped to jostle me violently forward to what seemed a small dim bath-room; the bath was full of steaming water, the floor strewn with towels. I could not scream; I fought and struggled, but even though I once got them all down in a heap, I could not release myself from the gag. Were they going to murder me, or drown me, or to suffocate me? I tried to beat on the floor with my feet, to rouse some of the gamblers in the noisy room below, but the carpet was so thick and soft, that my feet made no sound that could rise above that clamor. The rapidity with which at once, without talking, they had fallen on me to drag me to the bath-room, inspired in me a horrible suspicion of previous crimes. They had exchanged no remarks except one, when the baron said,

"Strip him—I think he is stunned. He has got two thousand pounds in his right-hand breast-pocket. Courtney saw him put it there."

I had shut my eyes and was remaining quiet preparing for a last desperate effort; they thought I was insensible. I felt their clutch relax as they laid me on a sofa and their four hands simultaneously rummaged my four pockets. That moment I scrambled to my feet, kicking down the baron and felling the old man. In a moment I tore away with supernatural strength the bandage round my knees, broke loose from that which bound my arms, and drove the colonel backwards with a tremendous crash against the door of that dreadful room. At that moment as I stood there at bay, my hair disheveled, my eyes glaring, my hands eager for their throats, a penknife, my only weapon, drawn in my right hand—facing Rensaux, who, lithe and swift, had pulled out a stiletto and was ready to spring on me when he could find an opening—suddenly the door at the further end of the room opened, and Courtney, the young officer, ran towards me.

"No, you must do him no harm!" he said, throwing himself before me. "We may be bad enough, but there shall be no more murder here. He has done you no harm. It was I brought him here. Raise a finger against him and I will denounce you all!"

"You will, will you?—you dare, rascal!"—began I, said the baron. "Remember who you are."

"I was sure you would stand by me," I said to Courtney; "if you once knew that these men were thieves and murderers—they want to murder me. Help me, help! and quiet, in God's name!"

Rensaux tried to rush at me, but Courtney caught him by the arm and struck the stiletto from him.

"You mistake us. Do you know who this gallant protector of yours is, Monsieur Englishman?" sneered the old man. "No? Then I will tell you—he is a poor wretched vagabond whom we clothe in disguise and pay to allure rich foreigners like you, and fools from the country, to our gambling rooms. He is our tout and decoy—a brave, honest, noble, young Englishman, is he not? Ugh! he'll suffer for this, and his little wife's outer will run short for a day or two, eh, Colonel? He'll starve for it, eh, M. Rensaux? I rather think myself he will. Curse him! if he was only my serf, I'd throw away two hundred roubles to get him knouted for this—that would tan his white skin and flush tanning him."

"This is not true, Mr. Courtney?"—I turned to him.

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Courtney hung his head and was silent.

"I am your slave and drag," he said to them, after a moment's silence, "and I obey you; but this countryman of mine, who followed me here so trustfully, I tell you, shall not be injured. I'm dangerous just now—come near me, one of you, and I might use a knife dangerously. After all, Siberia is not much worse than this life."

"Take your miserable money," I said, throwing a handful of napoleons down upon the floor; scramble for it—I will not take away what has been perhaps stolen from honest people."

"You are too hard upon us—you entirely mistake us," blandly said the baron rubbing his hands.

"We must have satisfaction for this insult," foamed the colonel.

"Curse him! let him go," muttered the old man; "it's lucky for the fool."

"Give me a knife some one, and I'll cut one of his arms off," said Rensaux.

But the gang gave way as we resolutely advanced, and they left the door open for our retreat.

Another minute, I was out in the street, breathing free—saved, by God's mercy, from that imminent danger. Courtney pressed my hand warmly, and without a word turned and sprang up the steps leading to that den of thieves.

Three days later, as I was coming out of my hotel, a beggar, wrapped in the dirtiest of sheep-skin coats, tumbled me on the arm. A waiter had just pointed me out to him. He handed me a letter from Courtney, adjuring me to follow the beggar, who would bring me to his lodgings, on a matter of life and death; it was not safe for him to venture out. I followed the man with entire confidence through many dark, dirty streets in the poorest part of St. Petersburg, and clambered at last four stories above a tailor's shop. I knocked at the door; a very mournful, ladylike woman, whose dress bespoke great poverty, opened the door. It was Courtney's wife. Courtney was there, no longer in uniform, but dressed in rags, with neglected hair, his face buried in his hands, the image of profound despair.

He at once told me his story. He was the younger son of a country gentleman in—shire. On his way home from India, on sick leave, he had fallen in love with an English girl whom he had met at Malta, and had run away with her to Alexandria, where they had married. Selling his commission, he had then gone into business, and had come out to St. Petersburg to purchase land for a cannon foundry; but his partner had cheated him and fled to America, with nearly all the money collected to buy the property. Almost in despair at this cruel blow, he yielded to temptation and gambled with his last hundred pounds. There, after some transient successes, he had gradually fallen lower and lower into the power of the wretches from whom he had saved me. They had entangled him in debt till he was literally their slave. The very clothes I had seen him in were only given him after dark, when he had to assume the odious character of decoy.

"Oh, save me!" he said, hiding his face with his this bony hands, "from this life of degradation—from this living death—from this misery into which I have dragged one I love dearer than myself! Help me to fly to England, and avoid the hundred forms of death with which these men have surrounded me! Their spies watch me everywhere; they may even have seen you come here!"

As he uttered these words he threw himself abjectly at my feet, as if his whole nature was degraded to that of the most hopeless and debased of slaves.

I reproached him for a despair that was unworthy of an Englishman, and promised my aid.

"Don't reproach him," said his wife; "he has had scarcely any food since you saw him; and hunger takes away the bravest man's courage. You will save us from this horrible sentence! John has fallen, but oh! how he has suffered."

As she said this, the unhappy woman—already aged with trouble—fell on her knees beside her husband and seized my hand. I raised her and tried to comfort her.

"I dare say," she said, "it seems to you that we are hopelessly degraded, and fallen indeed, to bend so abjectly under these sorrows; but we are alone here, surrounded by enemies, in a foreign country; and your visit has been the only glimpse of sunshine we have yet seen. Ah! your words seem words of comfort from heaven."

"I am acquainted with a Prince Toberkasky, a kind, generous fellow," I said, "to whom I have letters of recommendation; he is nephew of the Minister of Police. I will interest him in the safety of your husband, and will advance money to send you both to England by the Hull steamer, that starts for England to-morrow morning at seven o'clock. We will supply you both with money and clothes during your stay, and we will take care that the police agents guard you safely to the vessel."

It did my heart good to see the light return to the eyes of the unhappy husband and his young wife, as they loaded me with thanks and prayed Heaven to bless me a thousand-fold for all I was about to do.

I sat down at the broken table in that miserable room, and had taken out my pocket-book to count out the money required for their passage and outfit, when there came a gentle knocking tap at the door. Courtney and his wife started and turned pale as death. I saw his hand tremble as he went and turned the handle to admit the visitor. His wife sunk into a chair.

It was the baron, sleek, calm, bland, and smiling as ever. His portly form was compressed in an immaculately fitting frock-coat. He rubbed his hands and eyed us paternally through his beaming spectacles.

"A charming group indeed, and after the antique," he said, in the most perfectly pronounced French. "Benevolence comforting Poverty and Despair. As I expected, the English monsieur is advancing money to help his two amiable proteges to escape his too credulous creditors. Just so. En bien! all I say is Benevolence must sadly need proteges to look for them among people like this."

"I warn you," I said, my blood heated at the coolness of the heartless scoundrel, "not to interfere in this matter."

"Oh! we have quite done with the poor devil, believe me, my dear monsieur," replied the baron. "He has served our turn; but let me as a friend, in spite of that slight misunderstanding of yesterday"—(a slight misunderstanding was the attempt to murder me)—"warn you not to trust that misguided young man with money, for such is his insatiable tendency to gamble, he is sure to lose it all in two hours."

"We do!" I gasped Courtney, "it was you lured me to all my misery."

"We do!" I gasped Courtney, "it was you lured me to all my misery."

"But let me tell you one thing," said the baron, "that if your protégé does not leave St. Petersburg within three days from this time it will be bad for his health; viz., I will no longer intrude on so pleasant a family circle. Good-day, Monsieur Englishman. But one hour after midnight of the third day and he will meet with disagreeable, mild."

We breathed freer when the door closed on that detestable man.

"That," said Courtney, "is the chief of the young that ruined and enslaved me. Smooth and oily as he seems, he is one of the most crafty, rapacious, and unrelenting of men. Courtois is the money lender, the Colonel the blusterer to frighten timid men, Roussau the duellist to fight the reclusive. Though cardsharps and swindlers, they had never before, he assured me, to his knowledge, attempted any more desperate crime, but in my case he suspected a pre-arranged plot which they had of course kept secret from him."

I had seen the poor fellow and his wife on board the English steamer that started early in the morning, and was on my way to a masquerade at Prince Tcherkassy's. It was nearly one o'clock A. M. when I got there. It was a picturesque scene in the courtyard of the palace, where (the nights being still cold) a huge fire was blazing for the coachmen and servants to warm themselves. Colored by the crimson light, masks in the costumes of all ages and countries were passing up the great steps—shepherds and queens, knights and jesters, Francis the First, and Greek and Venetian ladies, barons and abbots, Pierrots and dunces. Every moment from fresh carriages poured fresh clusters of anomalous personages, all laughing and chattering in a dozen different languages, while from within the palace came the clash and clang of music.

The prince and princess greeted me as I entered, congratulating me on the entire success of my plan for saving the poor young Englishman.

In the interval between the first and second dance I was introduced by Tcherkassy to his uncle, the Minister of Police, a very grim, morose, and Rhodanthean personage in antique uniform, who seemed to regard the whole world with suspicion and me with considerable distrust.

"How do you like our cracked column and the room where Peter the Great was murdered—the chief sights of our capital?" were his first words to me. This sarcasm was a rash one I myself had made to a friend only two days after landing.

I turned off the observation by telling the keen-eyed minister the story of the gambling club.

"I have long had my eye on it," he said, "it belongs to a gang with branches in all the great European capitals. They change about, and it is hard to fix one's claws on them. It is well that young man left, and you, monsieur, too, had a narrow escape."

I quite agreed with him. I was resting after a dance, chatting to the Princess Tcherkassy, when the arrival of some singular mass produced a sensation in the room. A richly-gilt palanquin, hung with crimson Chinese silk, entered, borne by four mandarins. They wore robes of flounced silk, and paced with great gravity, the peacock-feathers in their oddly-shaped caps nodding as they walked. They did not utter a word, but setting down the palanquin in the corner of the hall-room, stood by it, first drawing aside the silk curtains that hid their master. The occupier of the palanquin, who wore a mask, and was dressed as a Chinese emperor, sat there propped up with cloth-of-gold cushions, perfectly unmoved by all that passed around him. The Chinese mandarins were soon forgotten, and the dancing went on. To our surprise, at the end of the fourth dance, the palanquin was still there, but the bearers were gone. The dancers began to crowd round the palanquin to interrogate the mate and imperturbable emperor, to tease him with banter, or to prevail on him to dance. As we crowded some one stumbled forward against the palanquin. To my horror the silent Chinese figure inside it fell motionless upon its side and remained there. I sprang forward and lifted it—it was a corpse!

I tore off the mask, and saw to my indescribable horror a face that I at once recognized as Courtney's. However they had killed him he had died calmly. Unhappy man! he must have returned to shore after midnight, and after I left being deceived by spies waiting to some gambling-house, and there murdered. From the unhappy wife I afterwards ascertained that the supposed murderers had handed him a letter as if from me, and written in a handwriting resembling mine. The bringing of the body to the ball must have been a pre-arranged plan to mock me in sight of the Minister of Police.

There was a terrible scene of consternation when the fact became partially known, but the palanquin and body being removed, the dancing was renewed. The matter was hushed up as much as possible, and the waves of gaily soon closed over the horror. Neither the Baron nor his confederates were ever again seen in St. Petersburg, nor, as far as I know, did justice ever overtake them for this cruel and daring crime. The wife of the unhappy man was sent back by the Prince and myself to her family in Malta, who received her kindly.

The surgeon called in to see the body gave it as his opinion that poor Courtney had first been chloroformed, then suffocated in a vapor bath—was it, I thought, in that horrid room toward which they had dragged me?

The Power of Song.

The following true and touching incident is told of the effect of hearing for the first time the song of "FATHER, DEAR FATHER, COME HOME."

A constant frequenter of a public glass-house was sitting at a table, with a glass of liquor in his hand. Night after night, in the "wee, wee" hours, he would go home intoxicated, saddening the hearts of the household. This evening, some one in good voice, commenced singing this song, which instantly riveted his attention, and as it appeared more and more to him, he so softened it, that he quietly emptied the contents of the glass into the spittoon at his side, and, as the song finished with "Father, dear father, come home," he left the room, and never since has indulged his former taste, but has become a steady workman, following his trade, blessing his family with love, and gladly offering thanks to the writer of words so touching in their simplicity, yet powerful in their effect, that one lost to the influence of kind friends, grew strong under them. Such may be the power of a simple song!

AFTER THE PARTY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST BY DOLORES.

A face, oh! a face so exquisitely fair, With a half-blown rose in her waving hair.

And her silvery laugh that haunts me so! Like a bird's clear song—like music low.

And a magic light in the liquid depth of her eyes, Kissing, kissing Kittie of those dark blue eyes.

Exceeding dear, oh! so fair and sweet, Is the glimpse of a face in my dreams I meet.

DENE HOLLOW.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,

AUTHOR OF

"EAST LYNNE," &c.

[The advance sheets of this story have been purchased by Mrs. Wood for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XII.

BORN WITH THE OLD SQUIRE IN THE NIGHT.

Knock, knock, knock! The knocking, very gentle, was at Sir Dene's chamber-door, Gander stood there, in the dull light of the November morning. "If my bell does not ring, call me at nine o'clock," were Sir Dene's orders to Gander the previous night. Very unusual orders indeed.

For Sir Dene, unless he was actually ill, liked to be up by times as of yore. The once hale old man was breaking up fast; more than age was willing upon him. Generally speaking, his bell rang for his shaving water long before eight.

He had felt out of sorts the previous day. Not ill; "out of sorts," he answered when questioned. News had come in of a sad stage-coach accident on the awkward old bridge at Powick; and it had recalled to Sir Dene all the back trouble of the accidents on Dene Hollow. Not that the trouble needed recalling; more or less, it was ever present with him.

Knock, knock, knock. Rather louder. "Come in then. Can't ye hear?"

By which irritable answer Gander found his master must have spoken before. The feeble voice had failed to catch his ear. In went the old serving-man—for Gander was himself getting tolerably old now—in the striped jacket he always wore, and summer, wore in a morning. Sir Dene, a cotton night-cap on, writing a hanging tassel, raised his head on the pillow.

"Where's the hot water?"

"I've not brought it, Sir Dene. I thought maybe ye'd take a bit of breakfast afore stirring."

Now Sir Dene was feeling weak, shaky, feverish; almost as though he should like some breakfast first. But he had an unquenchable aversion to giving way.

"I don't know, Gander, I'd like to be up and doing as long as I can."

"It's a regular stinger of a morning, master. Wind nor-east, and enough to cut one in two. Air bleak, and as dull as ditch-water."

"Is it? We don't have the fine weather we used," remarked Sir Dene—as many another old man is apt to say at such a time. "There's no good bright days now, Gander; no sparkling crisp sunshiny frost. What's become of 'em?"

"It have been a dull autumn; and it seems to be a setting in for a dull winter," returned Gander. "I'll fetch you up a cup of tea, Sir Dene. It'll do ye good."

Quitting the chamber before Sir Dene could make any denial, he speedily reappeared with a small tray of breakfast. A cup of tea, hot buttered toast, and an egg. Sir Dene sat partly up; drank some of the tea, and then lay down again.

"You'll try a bit of the toast, sir."

A slight waive of the hand answered him. Gander, who must have been ill indeed not to relish his own breakfast, pressed it with concern.

"You'd relish it, I think, Sir Dene. It have got plenty o' butter on it."

"I've no appetite, Gander. I think my time's coming."

Gander understood the allusion—that it meant for death—and felt a little uncomfortable. As he stood looking down at Sir Dene, he saw that the once fresh and healthy face had an unusual pallor on it. Between the white night-cap and the white pillow, it looked nearly as white as they did.

"You'll be better after breakfast, Sir Dene. It's this nasty gray east wind morning, as is upsetting everybody. I wish you'd try the toast."

"Squire Arde came and paid me a visit in the night, Gander. I think we shall soon be together again."

Gander could not make out what Sir Dene was rambling about. He had drawn up the blinds, and now glanced round to the gray skies he had been talking of—as if that would help him.

"The old Squire, ye know, Gander. He looked just as he used to look; he'd got his pepper and salt suit on, and the little old drab overcoat put on. We were having a comfortable chat together, him and me. 'Twas like old times.'"

"It must have been a dream, master."

"Well, I suppose it was. It seemed like reality. As happy as kingfishers, we were, as two, chatting together. It seemed good to be with him."

"To be sure it would, sir. I know a bit o' what you mean."

"Won't be long, I take it, Gander, before I go to him. It's getting a most time. God, he knows best. But I don't think it'll be long."

Drinking up the rest of the tea, Gander dexterously put some toast into the old man's hand. Sir Dene ate it up; perhaps half unconsciously. Nevertheless, he did seem better after it, and then said he would take some more to use when he was better.

"It was that dratted coach overturning on Powick Bridge, as upset him," soliloquized Gander, going out with the cup to replenish it. But there's times now when

he's not a bit like himself. Fancy his saying he'd had a visit from old Arde!

The postman's ring echoed through the hall as Gander crossed it; and the looked bag was taken up so usual to Lady Lydia. In going back with the tea, Gander halted at my lady's door to inquire if there were any letters for his master.

Two. Sir Dene looked at their handwriting as he sipped his tea. They were from two of his grandchildren: Dene, the heir, and the barrister Otto. Laying them on the counterpane unopened, he began to eat another bit of toast, the faithful servant standing by.

"Ay. They think it's right to show the old grandfather that they don't forget him, these young bidden. But there's one of 'em that doesn't write, Gander."

Gander knew quite well to whom this alluded. Sir Dene was in the habit of talking to him of things that he never mentioned to other people.

"Well, Sir Dene—I've said it afore, and I say it again—my own opinion is, that Mr. Tom have wrote, and his letter must ha' got dropped into the sea crossing it."

"Nonsense!" peevishly cried Sir Dene. "Letters don't get lost like that."

"Tain't like Mr. Tom to bear malice; and I know he don't bear it. I'd write him a word, Sir Dene, if I was you, and tell him to come. Likely, he don't dare to make a move without a word from you."

It was just what had been, on and off, hovering in Sir Dene's mind for some weeks past—to write and summon Tom. Perhaps it wanted but this word of urging to put it in practice. "I think I will," he said. "He has been banished long enough for punishment. I'll do it as soon as I'm up, Gander."

And, having an object to accomplish, Sir Dene got up at once. When shaved and dressed, he set down by the blazing fire in the hall, and penned to Tom a letter of recall, short, kind, and peremptory. His hands shook, but the words were clear.

Folding it up, as letters were folded up in those days when envelopes were unknown, he sealed it with a big red seal and stamped it with the Clanwarrior Arms, Gander holding the lighted paper. When the seal was cold he dipped his pen in the ink and began to address it.

"Tom Clanwarrior, Esquire." Thus far had Sir Dene proceeded, when he looked up.

"What's the direction, Gander?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Gander. "I heard it once—a place with a crackjaw name."

Sir Dene laid down the pen in consternation. Was Tom in some unknown region of Ireland where he could neither be written to nor got at? He reassured came to Sir Dene.

"My lady must know it, Gander. It's where some of her people live. Go and ask her for it."

Away went Gander. Never a suspicion of any treachery on my lady's part, in regard to Tom, had occurred to this simple man and his simple master. Simple in all confiding honesty. My lady and her eldest son were coarsely sitting together at a well spread breakfast table, by a blazing fire: my lady in a light brown "a la mode," the pattern of which might have been taken from a pillow case; Jarvis in a flowery dressing-gown. Their conversation was brought to a sudden standstill as the servant went in.

"My lady, will you be so good as to give me Mr. Tom's direction?"

For answer, my lady, a little taken to stare at Gander up and down.

"Sir Dene has sent me for it," added the man.

"What does Sir Dene want with it?" she questioned.

"I believe it's to address a letter to him," said Gander, who never was too obliging to my lady. "Sir Dene is waiting for it now, please."

Quite equal to the occasion was Lady Lydia, without the help of that interchanged glance with her son. "I must search in my desk for it, Gander. My best regards to Sir Dene, and I'll send it to him almost immediately."

"The post is being recalled," remarked Jarvis when they were alone.

"I dare say. He is not coming though," said Gander, who never was too obliging to my lady. "Sir Dene is waiting for it now, please."

"I'll give one that won't reach him," whispered Lady Lydia.

She soon appeared in Sir Dene's room, and found him restlessly waiting—for he retained a great deal of his old impetuosity still. On a piece of paper in her hand was written a long address that Gander might have decidedly pronounced to be "crackjaw."

"Dear Sir Dene! How are you to-day? Tom's address do you want? Here it is."

Sir Dene read it over, and copied it on the letter.

"You take care of this and post it when you are in Worcester to-day, Gander," said he, handing the letter to the man. "It can go in the bag, Sir Dene," interposed my lady. "I shall have letters to send off myself to-day."

"Gander's going to Worcester; he'll post it there," persisted Sir Dene, really from no other motive than a spite of obstinacy. And Lady Lydia turned green as she thought how very near the letter would have been to reaching Tom, but for her precautions in regard to the great deal of his old impetuosity.

"Have you been writing to Tom at last, Sir Dene?"

"I've been writing for him to come home, Lydia; he has been banished long enough. I can't help it if it offends you. I don't think I shall be very much longer among you all, and I'd like to have him here. He was poor Geoff's legacy to us; you know."

"Oh, Sir Dene, don't say that. You'll be among us for years yet, I hope."

"It strikes me not. I've been with old Squire Arde three parts of the night; a token, I take it, that I shall be with him in reality."

Lady Lydia stared a little, and glanced at Gander.

"I've not much to keep me here now," went on Sir Dene. "But I should like to live to see Tom come home."

"You got your letters from Dene and Otto?" observed Lady Lydia, by way of dropping the last remark. "What do they say?"

"They don't say much. Dene and Charley are coming for the wedding. Otto—well—I—I have not read Otto, have I, Gander?"

"I didn't see you read it, Sir Dene," replied Gander, who was buying himself about the room. "The letter's at your elbow, sir."

"It's not often Otto writes," remarked Sir Dene, breaking the seal of the barrister's letter. "His time's too well taken up; if Jarvis had only half his patience, 'twould be better for him, Lydia. Otto will make a name in the world, once he can work him-

self into note—get on to be a judge, I shouldn't wonder."

"He was of a plodding nature even as a boy," rather scornfully rejoined Lady Lydia. "He had no love for her son Otto."

"Now look here!" cried Sir Dene, as he read his letter. "Here's Tom been writing from Ireland to Otto to ask how I am, and saying he cannot get to hear a word of Beechurst Dene from anybody. That was two months ago, Otto says. No Tom doesn't quite forget the old man."

Lady Lydia, taking in the sense of the words as well as her anger allowed, felt that she should like to annihilate that blundering fool, Otto.

"But why the dence doesn't Tom write direct and ask?" burst forth Sir Dene, rather explosively. "It's his temper keeps him from it; that's what it is. He must have got a touch of the Clanwarrior obstinacy after all; though poor Geoff hadn't. Anyway, he'll have my letter now as soon as the post can take it to him. Don't you forget it, Gander."

"No danger, Sir Dene. I'll be too glad to see Master Tom back at home myself to forget it," added bold Gander for the particular benefit of my lady. "The house have never been the same without him."

"And see that his room is got ready, and all that, mind, Gander."

"It's always a ready and waiting for him, Sir Dene."

"What else does Otto say, Sir Dene?" inquired Lady Lydia, with an impatient face.

"What else? Well, he says he shall hope to be down at the wedding. There you may take his letter away and read it if you like."

The wedding, thus mentioned by Sir Dene's grandson, was that of Captain Clanwarrior. For Mary Arde, yielding to persuasion (as she regarded it) and fate, had at length been won over to fix the probable date of her marriage before the year was out, and had to say when she answered in her desperation "After Christmas, then."

Her conscience smote her as she said it; smote her of sin. For, down deep in her heart lingered vividly as ever the image of that scapegrace Tom; and in spite of her secret prayers, her tears, her striving, she could not thrust it out. Since that summer evening's visit to the Trailing Indian, not a business had rested on her mind of Tom Clanwarrior's disloyalty to her and of his utter worthlessness; and yet—love him less she could not.

"I may be able to forget him, once I am married," she said to herself over and over again; and—as good marry Jarvis as anybody else.

And, in a short while after making the concession, May absolutely began to regard it as a boon, and to look forward to the marriage with a something like satisfaction. Not in the marriage itself, poor girl; but as a release from uncertainty. The nearest of her life was so great as to be absolute torment. Thus matters were arranged to the satisfaction of everybody; other people were all agog with pleasure; and on May's part there was no thought of drawing back. Sir Dene liked the proposed union immensely. He privately deemed May a great deal too good for Jarvis; but that was the Arde business, not his. Lady Lydia was in the seventh heaven of delight; and the Squire's wife wrote sundry letters to intimate friends, apprising them of the completion of the contract of marriage between Captain Jarvis Clanwarrior and her beloved daughter, Millicent Mary Arde. The reader will therefore readily understand how objectionable would be the return of Tom Clanwarrior to upset, or possibly to upset, the onward stream of events, coursing along so smoothly.

"Once got the wedding over, and he shall come, if it must be so," said Lady Lydia to Jarvis, "but that must take place in safety first."

Jarvis resented the intimation. It was as much as to insinuate that May cared for Tom still, more than she did for him; his hair and his temper alike bristled up. The captain was very attentive lover; never a day passed but he would be at the Hall once or twice. But any attempt to enter on the dearest of loves suppose they have a right to offer, was so promptly discouraged by May, in fact he saw they would be so evidently distasteful, that the gallant captain prudently confined his display of affection to warm hand-shakes. Now and again he ran up to town for three or four days, and May would then feel free as a bird in the air.

In the afternoon of the cold and bleak November day, spoken of above, May, well muffled up, returned to the Hall in her father's open carriage, having been with him to Worcester. Whether it was her chronic state of low spirits and the intimation they caused, that rendered her chilly, certain it was, she now always felt more or less cold.

Her errand to Worcester had been to the freemaster's; to try on certain of the dresses that were being prepared for the wedding. Mrs. Arde, suffering from some temporary indisposition, had remained at home.

"You look cold, May," said the Squire, as he gave his hand to help her down.

"Do I, papa? It is cold. I think I will run about a bit to warm myself, before going in."

May's running about to warm herself consisted in a listless kind of slow sauntering. She was full of spirits to run, walking about the premises, back and front, buried in her own sad thoughts, she was about to turn in at the gate leading to the kitchen garden, when the saw Cole, the farrier, turn out of the stables. A favorite carriage-horse of the Squire's was ill at the time. May waited at the gate till the man came up.

"Is old Jack better?" she asked.

"Not much, Miss May. I've been giving him another ball."

"What a cold day it is!" cried May—and she shivered a little as she spoke.

"Coldish," returned the man. "It strikes me we shall have a hard winter of it, Miss May."

"I hope not—for the poor's sake," was May's answer. Her sweet brown eyes, with whole flood of sadness lying in their depths, went straight out to him. Cole and Miss May had been on quite familiar terms always, so to say; the result of his sister's being the young lady's attendant. When Miss May was a little tottering damsel in buckskins, Harry Cole, the good-natured laughing scolding, would take the little lady "up to the moon." They were great friends still.

"I hear Mr. Tom's sent for back, Miss May."

At the unexpected words, a rush of crimson dyed May's face. Harry Cole, who had more innate delicacy than many gentlemen, had stooped to get some spots of mud off his trousers at the ankle, and missed the sight.

"Indeed," said May, constraining her voice to indifference.

"While I was at the Dene just now, Gander got in from Worcester. He told me he had been a posting a letter for Mr. Tom—that Sir Dene has wrote to call him home again. It's too bad to have kept him over in that Irish place so long, Miss May."

"They say it has been for punishment," returned May, adding with the latch of the gate.

"I know they say it. Anyway, Miss May, that does for an excuse. Punishment for what, I wonder."

"All kinds of things are laid to his charge."

"Well, so they were, Miss May. But they didn't go down with them that knew him."

May felt as if her life's blood were coursing about anyhow. As Susan said, Cole had never been able to see a fault in Tom Clanwarrior.

"There was that bag of money you know. That was absurd."

"Oh dear you," answered Cole, with a laugh. "And lots more besides that. Some things are believed to this day as if they were gospel. Mr. Tom's one person and I the another, Miss May; but I know this—that if it had been me, I should have come back and faced it long ago. Any way I hope he'll soon be here, now."

"Susan has got the toothache," said May, by way of turning off the subject.

"Nerves her right; why doesn't she get it took out?" said Cole, who had some too much sympathy with Susan; she, in the right of her superior years, having been accustomed to dominate over him from childhood to now in the most unceremonious manner. "I've told her, Miss May—and others have told her, that she'll get no proper rest till she's rid of the tooth; but she is just as pig-headed over it."

"Is that you, Harry Cole? Come here."

Cole turned at the calling voice to see the Squire. Touching his hat to the Squire's daughter, he hastened away.

"Sent for at last, is he?" thought May. "But I don't think he will dare to come. Oh dear! what an unhappy thing this life is!"

She went indoors at once, too miserable to stay out. Utterly wretched was she, half reckless; and felt that she would give all the chance of future happiness in this life to get away from marriage and Jarvis Clanwarrior. Not that there was the smallest thought that she could. Fate was fate, and she might not turn aside from it. Susan Cole, her apron held up to her cheek, came forward to meet her in the hall.

"Here's Captain Clanwarrior awaiting for you in the little parlor, Miss May."

CHAPTER XIII.

OVER THE CLANRY SUP.

"It seems very odd, Gander."

"Never a answer to it of any sort, Mr. Otto; neither of coming nor writing. Never no more notices took out than if it had been dirt."

"Well, I cannot understand it."

The glitter of plate and glass was on the supper table, at which Otto Clanwarrior sat. He laid down his knife and fork to talk to the old serving man, who stood close to him, his eager face bent forward with excitement under the wax light.

It was the Wednesday before Christmas, and Otto Clanwarrior had just arrived at the Dene. For two purposes: to kill, as may be said, two birds with one stone. The one to spend as usual the Christmas tide; the other to assist in celebrating the marriage of Captain Clanwarrior.

The wedding was fixed for Tuesday, the twenty-ninth of December. Miss Arde had held to her original determination—not to be married before Christmas. Captain Clanwarrior pleaded for an earlier period in vain; and was at length fain to show himself grateful for the tardy one ultimately fixed. So the preparations were put in hand, and the invitations sent out.

Christmas day this year would fall on Sunday. This you understand was the week preceding it. On Monday, the nineteenth, the Squire went to London, on business connected with his daughter's settlements, and also to procure the marriage license. He intended to return by the Thursday night's mail, so as to be at home on Friday morning; which would be the day before Christmas Eve. The Hall was in the full swing of preparation for the festivities attendant on the wedding. Beechurst Dene had made ready, too, in anticipation of the expected guests.

Mrs. Letson and her children had accompanied Otto from London. It had not been Otto's intention to quit his work until the Friday; but his sister had appealed to him to accompany her; and she would not start later. Colonel Letson was in India with his regiment. They took the day coach to Worcester, and thence drove over to the Dene; reaching it as two night clocks were striking to sound a sharp fall of snow.

Sir Dene, weak in health, subdued in spirit, but dressed with extreme care as usual, his coat blue, his fine white hair (counting now) powdered, sat in the large drawing-room to receive them. Lady Lydia was with him, and also a shrunken-looking little lady in gray silk and hair as white as Sir Dene's and a close white net cap on which Sir Dene's late wife. The reader had the pleasure of once seeing her—at that stormy interview that witnessed the turning out of poor Geoffrey. She was now considerably past seventy; but she had come posting over in her carriage and four from her residence in Gloucestershire, to be present at the first marriage that was to take place amid her grand nephews. The nephews and Louisa Letson called her Aunt Ann, just as their fathers had done.

During the commotion caused by the entrance of the travellers, Jarvis came in, the bridegroom elect; came in from his usual evening visit to the Hall. In spite of the elaboration of his getting up, the curled hair, the shining moustache, and all the rest of the attractions, Otto thought he looked strangely haggard. Almost as much so as Sir Dene. And Sir Dene's looks had struck the barrister painfully.

"How dreadfully he is changed, mother," whispered Otto, under cover of the bustle.

"Change?" repeated Lady Lydia, her eyes and thoughts on her well-beloved son, the gallant captain. "Who's changed?"

"The poor old grandfather."

"Oh. He. He is getting on for eighty, Otto. You cannot expect him to be blooming forever."

"It's not exactly that—blooming. There's so intense a sadness on his face. He looks just as though he were worn with sorrow."

"Did you ever see such a shrivelled-up mummy as old Aunt Ann?" returned my lady, behind her fan. "If you'll believe me,

Otto, who has brought a cat and a parrot with her and two maids: one for herself, the other for the animals."

"She has never had children, you see, mother," was Otto's considerate answer.

"When we live a lonely life, we are apt to make pets for ourselves."

Gander had supper ready laid in the dining-room. Mrs. Letson—her head aching intolerably from the cold and the very long journey, for they had left London at six in the morning—declined to take any, saying she would rather go to bed: so Otto went to his room alone. During which, he and Gander had a dish of confidential chat together, after the custom of old times. They were talking of Tom Clauwaring. The summons sent to him by Sir Dene had brought forth no response whatever; so Gander was telling.

"I don't believe he ever got it," exclaimed Otto.

"He must have got it," returned Gander resentfully. "Don't I tell you, Mr. Otto, that I put it myself into the slit of the box at Worcester? As good as suppose that the mail didn't go on, that that letter didn't get along of it. Try a bit of raised-pie, sir."

Otto shook his head. Pies no late at night were too heavy for him. "If he did get the letter and could not respond to it in person, he might have written to Sir Dene."

"That's just what Sir Dene says. It has been tried him more than anything almost, that went after it, Mr. Otto. For days and days, as for weeks and weeks, after there was time for Mr. Tom to get here, Sir Dene was waiting and watching for him. 'Perhaps he'll be here by morning,' Gander, he'd say to me when he went to bed at night, and I'd the morning the first question 'ud be, 'Gander, has he come?' It has just been like a heart-break to him."

Otto's answer, his supper finished, leaned back in his chair. There was something in all this that greatly puzzled him.

"To be sure, it's remarkable the barrier. I am sure of it," remarked the barrister. "I cannot think why he should not have come."

Neither could Gander. Neither could Sir Dene. Neither, truth to say, could many other people. Sir Dene supposed that Tom was too conscious of his unworthy doings in connection with the Trailing Indian to show his face again yet awhile; and Sir Dene resented it accordingly.

The Chinese have a proverb: "To expect one who does not come, to lie in bed and not sleep; to serve and not be answered, are three things enough to kill a man."

It would almost seem as if the non-arrival of his favorite grandson were killing Sir Dene. But the yearning wish to see him, and deferred hope, the grievous disappointment, were giving place now to angry implacability.

"I never thought as Mr. Tom was one to resent affronts in this fashion," spoke Gander, beginning to remove the supper things.

"Poor Mr. Geoffrey wouldn't be done it."

"Nor I. He has the most forgiving disposition in the world. Besides—"

Otto stopped. The door was pushed open, and Sir Dene came tottering in, leaning on his stick.

"I hope you've got what you like, Otto. There's been nobody to take it with you."

"I've done famously, grandfather. No, thank you, no more. I never do take much late at night, or I should get in for a head-ache in the morning. Gander and I were talking about Tom, Sir. It seems a very strange thing that he—"

"Don't speak of him to me; don't mention him in my presence," roared Sir Dene, lifting his stick menacingly at an imaginary Tom in the distance. "If he were to attempt to enter Bechhurst Dene now, my servants should thrust him forth. Never again, never again."

"There's something or other wants explaining in all this," thought Otto. "However, it is no business of mine," he mentally concluded, with his usual rather selfish indifference to other people's interests.

Gander brought to some muffled port in a silver cup, and Sir Dene and Otto sat over the fire and sipped it. Little things troubled Sir Dene now, and he began mentioning the state of expectancy he had been in all day, looking for his two eldest nephews, Dene and Charles. Eldest in point of precedence, youngest in age. They were to have arrived at the Dene that morning from Scotland; and had not come.

"Sure they've never been so foolish as to take ships—which Dene's fond of doing in summer," said Sir Dene rather fractionally. "They might be kept out at sea a couple of weeks, if they were done that."

"They'd be sure to come by land, sir, at this season of the year, and with time limited," returned Otto. "Is their mother coming with them?"

"She can't," returned Sir Dene. "I'm sorry for it; for she's a great favorite of mine," and I've not seen her for these two years. There's more things than one going contrary just now, Otto."

"But why can't she come, sir?"

"Because she's ill. I believe it's intermittent fever, or something of that. I've thought the boys can get here to-night, Otto," he added after a pause.

"Well—of course it is just possible," replied Otto, in some consideration; and he felt sure now that the old man was sitting up, expecting them. "They'd come by coach no doubt to the nearest place to this that the stage touches at, and then post on. I don't think they'd be likely to come so late as this, grandfather. We shall see them in the morning."

"Ay, I suppose one must give 'em up for to-night," concurred Sir Dene. "And now is the world using you, Otto? Are you getting on?"

"Yes, I am getting on, grandfather," returned Otto, proud in his independent spirit, of being able to say it. "My name is becoming known and business drops in. No fear now but I shall make my way, and make it well."

"Ay, I always said you would, give you time, though you have been a keen back by struggles and expenses," observed Sir Dene. "You have been steady and hard-working from the first, Otto; and those who are so are sure to get on. It is the conviction that has lain on my mind of your steady perseverance, my lad, that has induced me to help you so readily in your embarrassments."

"It is the conviction that has induced me to help you so readily in your embarrassments," he repeated, looking at the old man with a look of surprise at that moment, Otto looked at Sir Dene over his rim. He did not quite understand.

"I have had no embarrassments, sir," he said as he put it down.

"Well, expenses then I suppose I ought not to say embarrassments. Whatever they were, I only felt they were legitimate. And I let you have the money with a very different feeling from any I ever let your spendthrift brother have; I can tell you that."

Less and less did Otto understand. "I have not had any money from you since you first started me in life, grandfather. There are moments," he added with a slight laugh, "when I feel proud of that fact. At least I am thankful for it."

"What do you call your first starting in life?" cried Sir Dene, looking hard at his grandson.

"After I had kept my terms and was called to the Bar, you generously put a check for five hundred pounds into my hands, sir. To start me in my profession, as you called it."

"Well, it did start me, grandfather. I set up my chambers with it—that didn't cost much; for all the furniture in them, bed included, is not worth twenty pounds. And the rest I husbanded and lived as economically upon as I could until work came in. I have never had cause to ask you for more, grandfather; and I never have asked it."

"Don't quibble, my lad. If you've not asked, yourself, for it, you have had it."

"Had what, sir?"

"Had what? My money. And I say, Otto, I have given it you with more satisfaction than any ever given to Jarry."

"But grandfather, I have not had any from you at all, I am happy to say. Except that first five hundred pound."

Sir Dene and his grandson were staring at each other with all their might. Sir Dene openly. Otto covertly: for he thought the poor old man's imagination was solely at work, that his memory was rambling.

"Five or six times at the very least, Otto—more I think; my books will tell—have I helped you to money within the last two or three years. Sometimes for large sums. Why should you wish to deny it?"

"It must be all a mistake, sir. I have had none."

Sir Dene leaned back in his chair, his lips compressed. Were all his grandchildren turning out false? He had believed Otto to be so sincerely truthful.

"How dare you say this to my face, young man?"

"It is the truth, grandfather. I don't know what else to say," and so earnestly did Otto say it, that Sir Dene almost began to wonder whether he himself was dreaming.

"Only a month or two ago—I was some time in October—I sent you up a check for a hundred pounds. Sent it up in a letter direct to your chambers. Come! What do you say to that?"

"I received it, sir, all safely, and acknowledged it to my brother, as he desired I should," quietly answered Otto. "I paid it away the same day, in conformity with his instructions."

For some moments Sir Dene did not speak. A light seemed to be breaking upon him.

"Oh, for Jarvis."

"I see, just tell me what you know about it, Otto."

"I don't know much, grandfather. Two letters were delivered to me that morning, each bearing the Worcester post mark. The one contained a few unimportant words from you to myself, hoping I was well and that; and a check for a hundred pounds. The other was from Jarvis; saying I should receive such a check if I would kindly pay it away to a person (a lawyer) who would call on me in the course of the day. The lawyer called, and I paid it to him."

"One more question, Otto; and yet, my boy, I hardly need to ask it. Is it true, what you say—that you have never had any money from me since that first five hundred pounds?"

"It is perfectly true. Neither have I asked you for any, sir."

"No, but others have, in your name."

"Jarvis, I suppose."

"Once or twice. Your mother chiefly, Otto," continued the old baronet, heading his five old feet forward, and sinking his voice to a troubled whisper, "she'd tell her son for that first hundred pounds of hers. It's my belief she'd sell her soul."

There was an ominous silence. Sir Dene, sat, half-beaten under the discovery; his head bent in thought, lifting his hand, lifting that, as he recalled the false pleas pressed up on him from time to time—Otto's non-success in his profession, his heavy expenses, and up to the need of money to run on with, so as to keep his head above water. Never had the conduct of Captain Clauwaring appeared so flagrant as now. A groan burst from the old man.

"Otto, I hardly know whether I ought to let this wedding take place. Whether in honor I should not show the Squire what a false man he is—a penitentiary—a coward."

"There's no doubt, sir, that Jarvis ran recklessly and foolishly into debt while he was in the army, and that he has been driven to his wife's end to find money to pay off the embarrasment it entailed upon him; but marriage may make the turning point in his life. I should say it would."

And Sir Dene groaned again in very bitterness of spirit, as he rose to go up to his room for the night, leaning on the bell-end arm of Otto.

The morning brought disappointment in the shape of a letter from Dene the heir. He wrote to say that a change for the worse had taken place in his mother. She was becoming so dangerously ill that either he or his brother could think of leaving her even to attend the wedding. The letter concluded with a half-jesting wish, that Jarvis might find a better groomman. For young Dene (considered as first and foremost in the Clauwaring family after his head) had been selected by Jarvis to undertake that office. Jarvis, with rather an ill grace, observed to the barrister that he supposed the honor must fall to his lot now; and said it as if he grudged it to him.

"It's not such an honor as I look upon it," was the significant retort of Otto Clauwaring.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN ARRIVAL AT THE TRAILING INDIAN.

The snow-flakes were falling, large and thick. Falling on the hat of Mr. Sam Pound, sitting by one leg on the gate of the Trailing Indian. His mother was out. Black had gone down to Hurst Lett on some urgent private business; no doubt connected with certain poisoning friends of his who lived there. At least, such was the conclusion drawn by young Mr. Pound, who was tolerably shrewd. Finding it rather lonely indoors as twilight approached, for not a soul was in the dreary inn but himself, Mr. Pound had stepped out to have a look at the lane, by way of taking a slight change.

"Mother Goose be a pecking of her geese," quoth he to himself, raising his eyes to two floating feathers that filled the air. "Us has't had a regular snowy Christmas this ever-so-long. Bids fair for now."

That was Friday. On and off since Wed-

nesday the snow had been falling; so that the roads were already pretty thick with it. Regarding a fall of snow chiefly as a medium for the exercise of snow-balling some unsuspicious individual, whom the blow caught unawares, Mr. Pound was extremely satisfied with the prospect before him.

"We shall have the morris-dancers here," cried he, sucking up his breath. For he was very fond of morris-dancers; and thought them, next to snow-balling his friends and enemies, the best things brought by a hard winter.

Swinging to and fro on the pale was rather slow work, particularly as the snow had got into the gate's hinges and prevented its swinging quickly. Taking his foot off, he picked up a handful of snow and sent it bag against the opposite hedge of holly. A sure marksmanship, when a snowball was the weapon.

"Hallo!"

The exclamation was caused by surprise. Just as Mr. Pound was contemplating a second ball to follow after the first, a huge mountain of snow—and it looked like nothing else—loomed slowly into view on the high road that crossed the end of the lane. Peering at this extraordinary phenomenon as well as circumstances permitted him—that is, between the fading daylight and the storm of snow—Mr. Pound at length made it out to be the wagon."

"Well, I never!" cried he. "That there wagon hasn't hurried herself."

In those days the wagon was an institution in England; and was used for the conveyance of parcels and passengers from one town to another. This particular wagon in question was in the habit of passing the road weekly, generally at dawn on a Friday morning—for wagons travelled right and day. They could not afford to halt by night on the road, not they: on they blundered, crawling and creeping, and dragging their slow length along. A distance that a stage-coach might take twelve or fifteen hours to accomplish, the wagon could get through in a week. That this one had been a tolerably long time on the journey, was proved by the amount of snow collected about it.

"Black, he said as he hadn't a seen the wagon go by, and I told him it had went by afore he was up. Thought it had. Hallo! it be a stopping."

The stopping of the wagon opposite to the lane was less surprising than it had been; for it sometimes brought parcels for the Trailing Indian. Now and then it let out passengers at that place to claim hospitality, or to go on to Hurst Lett. Strictly speaking, this was what might be called a cross-country wagon, communicating with the London and Worcester wagon, the London and Gloucester wagon, and other wagons of importance. Mr. Pound began to trudge towards it, to receive anything those might be for his master. He could not resist the temptation of sending a snowball or two at the horses.

"I'll lay a twopenny as it have brought that there box o' baccy from Lunnun!" thought he as he advanced. "Black have been a growing over it this—"

Mr. Pound's words failed him in very surprise. Of all the surprises brought by the wagon, this was the greatest. Instead of the expected "box o' baccy" disintering itself from the tackle, there appeared, help-ed out by the wagoner—Miss Emma Geach. Mr. Pound's first movement was to halt where he stood, and give vent to a low whistle; his second, to turn tail, scutter home, bang to the inn-door behind him, and slip the bolt. The return of this young person displeased him excessively. Of the two, he would rather the wagon had brought a wild bear. Miss Geach was at the door almost as soon as he, rattling at it in an authoritative manner, when she found it fastened.

"Now then, Sam Pound, open the door!"

So, he had recognized him, in spite of the falling snow and the twilight! Not seeing his way particularly clear to keep her out, Sam unbolted the door.

She came in with her old warm cloak drawn round her, worn and shabby now, and a ragged shawl tied over her bonnet. She had gone away grandly by coach, plump, blooming, her big hand-box of clothes beside her; she came home humbly in the wagon, thin and cross-looking, and with no luggage at all—unless a handful of things tied up in a cotton handkerchief could be called such. Sam Pound, backing against the rack behind the door, made his observations in silence.

"Take a cup o' beer to the wagoner, Sam Pound, and be quick about it."

Whatever Miss Geach had lost in the way of looks, she had kept her tongue. Sam could no more have dared to disobey the imperative order than he'd have attempted to fly. Drawing the beer, he went out with it, walking as slow as he could, and sullenly kicking the snow before him. In the first place, Sam held Miss Geach in no favor; her scornful treatment of his brother Jim excited his resentment, and he also disliked her on his own account. In the second place, suppositions were crossing his mind that now she was back, he might no longer be wanted at the Trailing Indian; and, as it was a tolerably idle service, it just suited Mr. Sam.

When he returned indoors, and he took his time over the errand, Miss Geach had been upstairs to her room, had put on a gown of hers that had stayed all this while at the inn, and was down in the kitchen again, making some tea. Brushed up a little from her cold journey of several days and nights, she looked tolerably the same as usual. At the time, perhaps, but quite as good-looking.

"Toast this bread, Sam Pound."

Sam Pound's mind was so entirely stunned by the prodigious altogether, that he complied mechanically, and stooped down to toast the bread. Two rounds of it, off the quarter loaf. Miss Geach put on plenty of salt butter, drew the table closer to the fire, and sat down to her tea.

"Where's Black?" she asked then.

"He's went off to Hurst Lett."

Sam had squatted himself against the wall on the other side of the fireplace, and sat facing her, his hands clasped round his smock-frock and legs. The reflection of the flame played on the red bricks; the kitchen looked homely and comfortable in the fire light.

"Wonder when her had any tea last?" thought Sam, as he watched the eagerness with which she ate and drank; "she'd ought to think 'twas o' one while."

"And how's the place going on, Sam Pound?" demanded Miss Emma, pouring out another cup of tea and beginning upon the second round of toast.

"Mortal dull. Us haven't had a customer

is all to-day, not for as much as a pint o' beer."

"Who was asking about this here inn?" I meant the place out o' doors. Hurst Lett, and that."

"It be as it always is, for what I see," returned Sam, ungraciously determined to give no more information than he could help.

"Anybody dead?"

"The mists here be dead."

"Don't I tell ye I wasn't asking about this here house, Sam Pound," was her answer, given wrathfully. "How's Cole, at the Smithy?"

"He've had a bad wrist, he have, through a beast of a horse what up and kicked him a being shod. It be got well again."

"Is Mr. Tom Clauwaring come back?"

"The face her must have to ask that?" thought Sam, as he sat and stared. "No, he hasn't back, he hasn't."

"I suppose the rest on 'em be coming to the Dene for the Christmas. The heir and his brother—be they here?"

"I haven't a seed 'em."

"Be the Lunnun lawyer her yet?"

"I dun know," shortly answered Sam. "Them there quality folks don't concern me, nor me them."

Miss Geach was not to be repressed. "The captain—be he come yet?"

"The captain hasn't been away, as I've heard on," growled Sam.

"No, he hasn't. He lives at the Dene now, he do."

"I'm sure he do. There."

Miss Geach about to drink up a saucer-full of tea, paused with the saucer to her mouth—

"Who says he do, Sam Pound?"

"I says it, for one. All the parish knows he do. But he's about the place ever-living."

"Be you sure?"

"Be you sure as that there's buttered toast you be a swallowing of?" was Sam's conclusive retort. "The captain have lived along o' Sir Dene o'most a year now, he have."

A peculiar kind of light stole slowly over Miss Geach's face as she took in the assertion, making it look very hard. Sipping up the tea deliberately, she filled the saucer again.

"And the Squire's people, how be they?" she resumed, but with an air of preoccupation and of utter indifference to the question.

"Is Miss May married yet?"

"Not as I've heard on," said chirlish Sam, more than ever determined to tell nothing of his own accord.

"And how be your own folks a going on since I left these parts, young Sam?" she continued condescendingly.

"They bairn dead yet, our folks bairn, and there bairn none on 'em married," was the spoken response. "Nasty greedy cat!"

It was Mrs. Letson. She was in a plain pink silk, richly trimmed with lace; but she wore neither flowers nor jewels; her fair neck and arms were bare.

"Grandpapa, I have come with a petition," she coaxingly said, winning her pretty white arms around him. "Oh, if you will but grant it!"

"What is it, my dear?" he asked, bending to kiss her. For he loved her very well; though not as he had loved Margie. She kept his head down to whisper in his ear.

"Let me wear the diamonds to-night."

Up went Sir Dene's head with a jerk. A jerk of puzzled surprise.

"The diamonds, Louisa! What diamonds?"

"Yours, grandpapa. The Clauwaring diamonds."

Sir Dene shook his head. "Those diamonds have never been got out, except to be looked at, since my wife died."

"Then I'm sure the time they were aired," returned the young lady.

"Our diamonds are never worn, you see, but by the wife of the reigning baronet, Louisa," he explained, with a touch of the old pride, that was not yet at rest within him. "They will go to young Dene when I die, and be worn by his wife when he shall marry."

"But why need you be so exclusive, grandpapa. Dene's not married, nor likely to be."

"It is our custom, child. Your mother once attacked me on the subject of the diamonds; trying to persuade me to let her wear them. If I remember aright we were going to the ball at Worcester music-meeting, with the Polys, and others. But I gave her to understand once for all that it could not be."

"That was different, grandpapa. This would be only in our own house, just for to-night. If you would let it be the necklace only, then."

"I don't like to break through the rule, Louisa. Dene might not like it, either."

"Dene's not here. Besides—he has no right to like or dislike anything of the kind as long as you are with us. I think Dene would be the first to say that I should wear them, grandpapa."

Sir Dene remained silent, as if considering. Mrs. Letson rose, and began turning herself round in the light of the fire, her hands held out.

"My dress looks well, doesn't it, grandpapa? It's new on to-night."

"Very well, my dear."

"But don't wear any she's got—wretched old trumpery! Oh, grandpapa, if you would! Just the necklace, only. You would enjoy the benefit of seeing it worn on a neck once again."

And Sir Dene yielded. With the fond face kissing him, and the white arms entwined about him, he could but yield. But only the necklace, he said, and he was resolute in that. Only the necklace.

"Ring for Gander, Louisa."

The diamond-ear was kept at the bottom of a chest in the next room. Sir Dene unlocked the chest himself; and Gander opened down with his hands to get it out, in somewhat the same manner that Mr. Sam Pound had just dived into the wooden coal-hod at the Trailing Indian. He had to remove sundry things: Sir Dene's military orders (he had one on his coat to-night), garments belonging to the estate, and such like, eager, stood by and held the light.

But the case of diamonds was not there. Sir Dene snuck down in a chair speechless. Gander raised a hallalala.

this evening. All in honor, of course, of the coming wedding. Invitations had gone out to the first people of the county, including some of its resident nobility, and were accepted. The entertainment was to be on a grand and lavish scale; amidst other things, a band from a distance was engaged to play during the banquet.

On Sunday, Christmas Day, the Ardes would dine quietly at the Dene as usual. On Monday there would be a grand dinner at the Hall. Not so grand as this one to-night: Arde Hall was not foolish enough to attempt to vie with Bechhurst Dene, or put itself into the same scale of pomp and expenditure. And on Tuesday, the wedding-day, of course the Hall gave a breakfast.

With all his heart, Sir Dene wished this evening over. Truth to say, his strength was not equal to the entertaining of guests; though in his old-fashioned courtesy, he intended to try and do it as in his best days. But, if his old friend and neighbor were to be absent, half of his charm, for him, would have left it. Squire Arde was to have been home certainly, that morning. Sir Dene thought it very hard that he had not come.

"I hope the carriages will be able to get along the roads," thought he, as he went to the window and looked forth on the snowy landscape, shining far and wide in the light night. "It will be a long drive for some of 'em; they'll be twice as long doing it as they would if the roads were clear. Hope they'll take care to set off in time."

It was past five now, and the dinner hour was seven. As Sir Dene stood looking and chinking, the door was tapped at, and Captain Clauwaring put his head in.

"Mr. Arde is not back, sir."

"And why's he not back?" retorted Sir Dene in a tart tone. The tartness not meant for the absent Squire, but for Jarvis himself. Sir Dene had taken his resolution—not to speak at all of the deficit in regard to money matters that had come to his knowledge through Otto; at least, until the wedding should be over. But the fact lay open on his mind, and had rendered him barely civil since to either the Captain or Lady Lydia.

"He couldn't get his business done in time to leave London last night; he leaves to-night and will be home to-morrow," said Jarvis. "Mrs. Arde has just had a letter from him."

A letter at this time of day! What d'ye mean?"

"It was delivered about three o'clock this afternoon, sir. The mail was no doubt late at Worcester, and the road is very heavy now between there and here."

"There's no uncertainty about it, then—he won't be here to dinner?"

"No, sir, he can't be."

Sir Dene turned his back, and Jarvis retreated from the room. By-and-by, when the old man was dozing in his easy chair by the fire, he was woke up by a resplendent vision kneeling at his feet.

It was Mrs. Letson. She was in a plain pink silk, richly trimmed with lace; but she wore neither flowers nor jewels; her fair neck and arms were bare.

"Grandpapa, I have come with a petition," she coaxingly said, winning her pretty white arms around him. "Oh, if you will but grant it!"

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A Doctor as a Doctor!

A self-sufficient bumpkin who took up the business of physician and pretended to a deep knowledge of the healing art, was called upon to visit a young man with appendicitis. Being gazed long and hard, felt his pulse and pocket, looked at his tongue and his wife, and finally gave vent to the following:

"I think he's a gone fellow!"
"No, no!" exclaimed the sorrowing wife, "do not say that."
"Yes," returned Bolus, lifting up his hat and eyes heavenward at the same time, "you I do say so, there aren't any hope, not the least mite—he's got an attack of nihil fit in his bowels!"

"Where?" cried the startled wife.
"In his bowels, and can't be cured without some trouble and a great deal of pain. You see his whole paletary system is deranged; firstly, his vox populi is preeminently on his adulatorum; secondly, his outscarpal cutaneous has swelled considerably, if not more; thirdly, and lastly, his solar ribba are in a concussed state; and he ain't got any money, consequently he's bound to die."

A Suspicious Countryman.

A zealous representative of the Young Men's Christian Association was a few days ago drumming up recruits for the "noon prayer-meeting." On the street he met Mr. — now residing outside the city limits. The representative of the Young Men's Christian Association accosted him, and the following conversation ensued:

"Do you reside in the city, Mr. —?"
"No, sir; I live in the country."
"We have a prayer-meeting around here, and would be glad to have friends from the country meet with us; will you come?"
"Surely!"—A prayer-meeting?
"Yes, sir; come in and get a blessing."
"More suspiciously!"—"No, you don't; you can't come any of your confidence games on me, sir!"
He had evidently been reading the papers.

Hannah on the Rail.

There is a station on the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne, and Chicago Railroad called Hanna, in honor of a deceased citizen of Fort Wayne. A train stopped there the other day, and the brakeman, after the manner of his class, thrust his head inside the door and called out "Hanna," loud and long. A young lady, probably endowed with the poetic appellation of Hannah, supposing he was addressing her, and shocked at his familiarity on so short an acquaintance, frowned like a thunder cloud, and retorted, "Shut your mouth!" He shut it.

DISGUSTED.—A rural gent of eighteen summers invested in a banana on the cars, at Danbury, the other day. He carefully removed the peel, and put it on the seat by his side; then he broke the fruit up into small bits, eating it anxiously as he did so. When this was done he picked up the peel, stuck it in his lap, and finally threw the pieces out of the window, remarking as he did so, "That's the first of them prize packages I ever bought, and it's the last, you bet."

TALKED IN MEETING.—A Middletown correspondent of the Hartford Post says:—"A friend of ours, who has a habit of sleeping in church, was overcome on Sunday by Morpheus, and when asleep he is something of a semioquist. He is something of a sportsman, also, and dreamed he was hunting rabbits. During an eloquent passage in the sermon, he replied in his dream a rabbit, and started the congregation by shouting, 'There he goes.' The effect can be better imagined than described. Our friend didn't sleep any more that day."

A LUDICROUS SITUATION.—One of the humorous papers has a very funny cut. It illustrates this scene:—An old gent is walking in his garden. Presently the milkman comes along outside the high garden wall, and gives his customary yell. Old gent hears something, but being very deaf, is unable to make out just what is said; so he puts his ear trumpet in place, and elevating the bell-end of it over the edge of the wall, exclaims, "Here!" Milkman takes it for a dish, empties a quart of milk into the old gentleman's ear, and goes on about his business! It is about as ludicrous a situation as can be imagined.

SMART BOY.—"I know what your beau's pretty white horse's name is," said a little boy to his grown-up sister, the other morning; "it's Danye." "Hush, Edith," said the horrified sister, "that's a naughty word." "Well, I don't care if 'tis," said the juvenile, "that's his name, 'cos last night I was outside the fence when he stopped at the front gate, and I heard him say, 'Whoa, Danye!'"

JUST LIKE 'EM.—A Cincinnati paper brags a little over the dexterity with which its butcher boys do their work:—"The operation of killing and dressing is so rapidly performed, that if you stand the faces of the hogs after they are hung up to cool, you will find an expression of the most intense bewilderment upon them, as though pushing themselves to make out what had been going on and where they were."

A MEMBER of the South Carolina Legislature, an old bachelor by the name of Evans got off the following jeu d'esprit, lately: Evans was introduced to a beautiful widow, also named Evans. The introduction was in this wise:

"Mr. Evans, permit me to introduce you to Mrs. Evans."
"Mrs. Evans?" exclaimed the spirited bachelor; "the very lady I have been in search of for the last forty years!"

AN intoxicated man saw two cars passing him the other evening with red and blue lights in the front and rear. His fuddled brain comprehended colored lights, and he was heard to say to himself:

"Must be pretty sick—sickly here; they're running drug stores round on white wheels."

OH, THUNDER!—A pair of good-natured Irishmen, on a certain occasion, occupied the same bed. In the morning one of them inquired of the other, "Denials, did you hear the thunder last night?" "No, Pat; did it thunder?" "Yes, it thundered as if heaven and earth would come together."
"Why, this, didn't you wake me, for you know I can't sleep when it thunders?"



THE SLANG OF THE DAY.

(Fragment of Fashionable Conversation.)

YOUTH—"A-awful hot, ain't it?"
MAIDEN—"Yes, awful!" (Pause.)
YOUTH—"A-awful jolly floor for dancing, ain't it?"
MAIDEN—"Yes, awful!" (Pause.)
YOUTH—"A-awful jolly dad about poor Mrs. —, ain't it?"
MAIDEN—"Yes—quite too awful!" (And so forth.)

THE STAM-DOLLARS.

A German Legend.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Once roamed a lovely little maid,
Far over field and land,
And a wee loaf of coarse, black bread,
She carried in her hand.

And bitterly she moaned and wept:
"I have no friends at all,
No father and no mother dear,
A child so weak and small."

As thus she moaned, an old, old man,
Upon a crutch, drew near:
"For Heaven's sake, alms, my little maid!"
He begged with many a tear.

She gave to him the loaf of bread,
With words so sweet and mild;
Then saw she standing by her side,
A small, barcheaded child.

She gave the child her down warm hood,
And with her gold locks flying,
Passed to the brook-side, where a
Sick, half-clad girl was lying.

She wrapped her cloak round those chilled limbs,
Without a sigh or frown,
And to another beggar child,
She gave her only gown.

And now, the moonbeams softly fell,
They wove for this sweet, pious child,
A robe fit for a queen.

And stars, a heap of dollars bright,
Rolled from Heaven's azure floor,
And rained into the dear child's lap
A never-failing store.

—FRANCES A. SHAW.

"This Seat Is Engaged."

This railroad lie is getting to be a nuisance. So thought a gentleman the other day on a Boston and Albany train. "That is played out," said he to a well-dressed lady who had spread her skirts and her self on the two seats, while others were tired of standing. Sighting his action to the word, he took the seat that he had paid for, and out of which her meanness would have deprived him. Having the ride before me from Boston to Springfield, writes a correspondent of the Springfield Republican, I watched this thing. Here was a lady, with nurse and baby, who, in a crowded car, with two tickets, preoccupied four seats. There was a lady who at every stopping place took the outside seat, and so arranged herself as to hinder from entering any but a bold intruder, and when the train started she would slide back into the inside seat. As the car began to fill up, another woman repelled a timid intruder with, "This seat is engaged," though he knew it was a lie. But the next corner, being a more traveled man, took it. My eye then fell on a caption in the "Selected Miscellany" of the day's Republican:—"Why women are not magnanimous." The first sentence was:—"What women in civilized countries mostly want is magnanimity," and the concluding sentence was:—"Women are commonly trained to believe that so long as they are 'virtuous,' it is not requisite that they shall be sincere and magnanimous; therefore their common defects are insincerity and meanness."

Being a woman, I should have resented these sharp words of Mr. McCarthy, but with these women around me, what could I do but blush for my sex? I was just then, however, greatly relieved by my little Johnny, who whispered, pointing at an elderly and extremely respectable-looking gentleman near us, "Mamma, that man tells lies." "How do you know, Johnny?" "Why, he says that seat is engaged, and it's a lie, mamma. Should you think that he would tell lies?" And my blue-eyed boy looked the elderly gentleman over thoroughly. I don't know who he was, but if he should read this, let him understand that he has impaired one little boy's confidence in nice-looking elderly gentlemen, and if he reads his Bible, let him meditate on the words of Jesus, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." "Pooh," says the old gent, "that's the pious dodge. What's the sense of lagging your Christianity into a rail car?" Ah! that is the question. Wouldn't a little of the Christianity we preach about and

profess in churches be a good thing in rail cars? Ask the conductor what he thinks about it. I should like to hear a railroad conductor preach a lay sermon on human selfishness and meanness as he views it on the road. Was it not Lord Bacon that said, "Nothing more tests a man than travel?" That nothing tests a woman so much is the opinion of the writer.

Paris After the War.

A Paris letter says:—"The first thing which strikes one on re-entering the city is the extraordinary animation of its streets. After all I had heard and read I imagined nothing but ruins and ashes, and fancy having been so busy, the reality was rather a relief than otherwise. I had seen Paris mournful and stupefied, as it were, under the iron rule of the Commune. I returned to find it awakened to new life and activity. When I passed through the Champs Elysees the sunshine was splendid, a number of well-dressed little girls were skipping merrily in the broad alleys, while their mammae were keeping up a lively causerie over their lace or embroidery work, and I wondered how so quiet a scene could belong to the same city as the double row of crushed and battered-down houses I had just witnessed on my way from Courbevoie to the Barriere de l'Etoile."

To Make Home Happy.

To make home truly happy there should be no concealments; for they are the canker-worms. Let a woman tell her troubles and follies freely to her husband, and he will assist her out of them. He is her other self, not her judge and master. If a man confide in his wife, her penetration and quick wit will often see things that escaped him. We are in the world all day; our minds are occupied by many details, but she sits at home, often alone, or with but an infant companion. She thinks over what her husband has told her, and sees it in many lights; and has had the time which he wanted. The discovery that there has been a secret excitement on either side. Without perfect and entire confidence, married happiness is seldom lasting.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CLARK (Williamport, Pa.) writes: "I am a young man, 21 years of age, and am seriously thinking of matrimony. I have so far lived a rather unsettled life, and begin to think that it is about time for me to settle down. I have a young lady friend whom I think a good deal of, though I can't say that I am exactly in love with her. I have read considerably of the subject of marriage, and I don't think it right for any one to marry without love, and though I like the young lady very much, I can't say that I love her, and I would be very unfortunate if I were married to her. I should meet with some one else for whom I would feel that strong attraction of which we read in so many cases. Would it not be a risk in me in marrying without being more certain of my feelings? Have you ever heard of any cases of marriages from marrying under such circumstances? Yes, we have read of several such cases in novels; from which you seem to have derived your idea of love. It is true there are temptations, even in real life, which might be exposed to the danger of which you speak. But such cases are exceptional. From what you say of your feelings, you probably rank with that color-brained class who never experience such passionate desires as form the staple of book-love. Just such a feeling as you appear to feel for your imaginary, often develops into a real affection, which will burn with steady brilliancy when the fierce flames of passion have burnt out and left but ashes. We think though that you can safely take time to look about you. You are still too young to marry. We would advise you to inquire of yourself for what you like the young lady, for her face, her disposition, or her powers of broad making. Much depends upon the answer. There is no particular occasion for you to wed for five or six years yet, and you had best study your point carefully before taking the irreversible step."

J. B. D. (Peterson, N. J.) writes: "As you are kind enough to give advice to questioners, I make bold to trouble you, and will entreat it a favor if you will give me an early answer. My daughter, 17 years of age, has made a gentleman's acquaintance of whom I do not approve. He has the reputation of being dissipated, and is not at all the person that I would choose as a husband for my daughter. Yet she declares that she loves him, and in spite of all my commands she manages to meet him, and I am very much afraid they will marry without my consent. What would you advise me to do to break off this unfortunate connection? It has made me very unhappy. The girl has always been obedient to me, and even in this case pretends to obey me, but I know she does not obey me really by her feelings, and will not listen to good advice. Please favor me with an answer, and I will be ever grateful." The love of girls of that age are usually not very deep, and they are easily won. Give her seriously to understand that she cannot marry for four or five years at least; forbid her seeing the gentleman outside of your house, but permit him to call on her there; make his acquaintance yourself, and satisfy yourself if you are correct in regard to his character. She will possibly change this youthful fancy under the influence of unrestricted acquaintance, while opposition, under the condition of things as represented, may drive her into a hasty marriage. If he really prove an unreliable personage, and her fancy continues unchanged, you had better send her from home for a period. Change of scene and new acquaintances sometimes work wonders upon these girlish passions."

JENNY (Detroit) writes: "I am in love with a young lady to whom I am engaged to be married, and the wedding day fixed. I have just learned, to my great surprise, that she has also engaged herself to another gentleman. This is certainly playing double, with a vengeance. I have loved her warmly, and have had every reason to believe that my devotion was returned. You may imagine then my feelings on being told of this strange circumstance. I am entirely in a quandary, and inclined to think that she must have taken leave of her senses, and I don't see how it can be, could not marry her. If you cannot see any explanation of the circumstance it would be advisable to question her, perhaps she may be able to afford this explanation. Certainly, unless she can explain it by declaring the whole story a falsehood, there does not appear any other way of coping with the circumstance that you a fool. Perhaps, however, as you said, her brain may be slightly injured. If so, you need not look further; the vagaries of insane people are beyond explanation. In all such cases the first thing to do is to place yourself right in regard to the facts. There may be twenty circumstances, of which you are not now aware, that may give affairs a very different aspect. Never form important decisions upon hearsay."

FRAN (Columbus, O.) writes: "I have long been a reader of the Post, and am pleased with your idea of a correspondence column. Will you be kind enough to inform me if astronomers do not generally believe that all the planets are inhabited? I cannot believe otherwise myself, but would like to know if my belief agrees with that of scientific men generally. Think that the matter on which is impossible to arrive at positive knowledge, so that every one is privileged to believe as he pleases. There is probably a great diversity of opinion among astronomers upon the subject. Certainly some of these inhabitants have ever been seen, unless it be the 'Man in the Moon.' We know that the other planets revolve in the Earth in material, but that they exist under conditions which may differ greatly from those obtaining here. There are, however, strong arguments in favor of their having thinking inhabitants."

QUEST (Haton Rouge, La.) asks: "How do you account for the fact that a fire does not burn freely in the sunlight? What influence is there supposed to have upon flame? I have been much puzzled by this strange fact, and would like to know what scientific authorities say upon the subject. Please favor me with a reply in your next issue. The authorities say that your fact is not a fact, and we cannot attempt to account for facts of this character. Experiments have been made to test this belief, and the result tends to prove that there is no difference in the vigor of combustion in and out of sunlight. Appearances in this, as in many other cases, are deceptive."

LETTY (Lancaster, Pa.) writes: "I have been for years a reader of your valuable paper, from which I derive much pleasure and instruction. Will you be so kind as to give me your advice in the following case? I am a poor girl in the world and do not know how to make my living. I am not able to do housework, and I cannot get a school where I might make my living by teaching, and I have no trade. I hope you will favor me with an early answer. There are many trades which can be learned in a short time, and which would soon prove profitable to you. You know best at what business you would be likely to prove efficient. There is always a demand for good dress-makers, milliners, and so forth, and you can give your services in any of these trades. We can give you, under the circumstances, to decide for what business you are best suited, and to take advantage of the first opportunity of learning it."

OLD NURSCHER (Fairbury, Ill.) asks: "Will you be so kind as to inform me, in your answers to correspondents, how the musical composer, Anber, died? Whether he was killed in a riot, or whether he died a natural death? I have heard considerable about him, but could not find out any circumstances attending his death. He died in Paris, on the 11th of June, at his house in the Rue St. Georges, while the Communists were pulling down the house of his friend and neighbor, M. Thiers. This circumstance may have hastened his death."

S. S. HONAN (Lexington, Mass.) writes: "I hope you will answer for me these two questions. Will the process of boiling render water, in any measure, less distilled? Is there much early matter in maple molasses? Boiling is much more likely to produce the opposite effect. The process of distilling secures the water in a pure state, leaving the impurities behind. The process of boiling, on the contrary, drives off a portion of the water as vapor, so that the water remaining is more impure, or equal volume, than before. We do not exactly understand your last question. Do you mean to ask, to use common language, if there is much dirt in maple sugar? If this is your meaning, we would answer no, not usually. Of course, there may be cases in which the molasses is not kept in proper condition."

ROSS LEMIS (Edina, Iowa) writes: "Please to inform me through your valuable paper, how to make Skeleton Leaves and Phantom Flowers. The process is too complicated to fully understand from a brief description. The leaves are first steeped in cold water for about six weeks, or until the soft portions become decayed. They are then placed in warm water, and the pulpy matter carefully rubbed off. In some cases a further soaking may be required before the above can be entirely cleaned. They are next bleached with the chloride of lime or soda. Afterward well washed and dried on unsized paper. They must next be pressed in a book with a weight on top, and they will dry in proper shape. Some may be formed of sewing thread, stiffened with gum arabic. These may be tied to a central wire so as to form a bouquet. The whole to be covered with glass."

AGRICULTURAL.

How the Horses were Stopped.

A frightful disaster was recently averted in England by the good sense and bravery of a Cornish farmer. The horses of a stage coach had become unruly, and dragged the reins from the frightened driver, when the farmer, who was inside, forced himself upon the back of the shaft-horse, and thence to the leader. By shifting and crenching, he guided the terrible beasts down a steep, mountainous road, through the narrow streets of a crowded village, and finally brought them safe to a halt in the open country, after a mad drive of eight or ten miles. Commenting on the farmer's method, and the award of a medal for the act, a London paper says:—"It was odd that it should have required the visit of an Ohio farmer, some years ago, to make so elementary a truth clear, but in fact Harry gave the truth a practical application. Horses, though docile and gentle, are timid and nervous; noise and violence will only aggravate their terror if once roused; but they can be soothed if a man has the sense and temper to go about his task in the right way. Rarely was an apostle of the truest humanity, and it is only to be regretted that much of his teaching fell on so stony and ungenial soil as the coarse nature of English hinds and carmen."

Kindness to Cows.

Kindness must be constantly exercised towards milk cows, and we might add towards all domestic animals. Very often young cows are restless or irritable, especially during the operation of milking, but whatever the cause gentleness is the only treatment that should be allowed—violence or even harshness never. There are many causes after recent calving that may produce inquietude, but no other remedy will be effective. A young animal never forgets ill treatment, and a recurrence of similar circumstances will remind the cow of former punishment. Farmers should allow no one to milk, especially to milk their young cows, who are not always gentle and uniform in the operations of handling and milking the animals.

Price of Beef in England.

In England the price of beef rarely reaches twelve cents per pound. And this is the case when farmers hold their farm as yearly tenants. These farmers buy stock cattle, or cows or sheep, and then buy corn or linseed cake from America on which they feed them. Why, then, can they sell their meats at twelve cents per pound? The answer is that the English farmer feeds his stock for the sake of the manure, and the more stock he feeds the better does it pay. There is no other explanation.—Pacific Rural Press.

It seems to me singular that farmers north do not come north to look at farms and land when they wish to buy, during the summer season when crops are growing and the land speaks for itself, instead of coming down in winter when crops are housed and computed at guess work, and purchases are made at guess work. There would be more certainty in their investments, if they saw what the land could do for itself.—F. K. A. Maryland.

THE RIBBLER.

Charades.

On ancient rocks, in dim old woods,
Or by some shaded spring,
Lovely in all nature's moods,
My first is seen to cling.
My second leads to knowledge, power,
And guards with secure art—
Shows some of joy where sorrows lower,
And cheers the miser's heart.
My third is traced in sculpture fair,
Part of the human frame,
And when my whole sounds on the air,
A prett dosh proclaim.
Baltimore, Md. EMILY.

Word Squares.

To gather.
A conception.
A prison room.
A sea-wood.

Louisville, Ky. EDWARD WARD.

Biblical Square Word.

A golden vessel used in the temple service.

A prophet supposed to have been slain by a lion.

A Jewish month.

A name of the Supreme Being.

ISOLA.

Probability Problem.

A penny is laid at random on a common die. If the diameter of the penny is equal to a diagonal of a face of the die, what is the probability that the penny will not fall off?

ARTEMAS MARTIN.

McKean, Erie Co., Pa.

☞ An answer is requested.

Conundrums.

☞ When was Napoleon I. most shabbily dressed? Ans.—When out at Elba.

☞ Why is the palace of the Louvre the cheapest ever erected? Ans.—Because it was built for one sovereign—and finished for another.

☞ Why is the Empress of the French always in bad company? Ans.—Because she is ever surrounded by Paris-ites.

[We wish to express one fact on your recollection, which is, that many people are extremely fond of Paris-ites.]

☞ Why ought the patriot Garibaldi to be now called simply Garidi? Ans.—Because they have extorted the bal(!) from Garibaldi long ago.

☞ Why is your thumb, when putting on a glove, like eternity? Ans.—Because it's ever-last-in'.

[We wish the glove was!]

☞ When is a baby most like a cherub? Ans.—When it continually doth cry.

☞ Why is a parrot's perch like a person's special qualification? Ans.—Because he pinches himself on it.

☞ When does a man feel glibish? Ans.—When he makes his maiden speech.

☞ Why is an empty cabin like a bird of the poultry class? Ans.—Because it is a chancier (shanty clear).

ANSWERS TO LAST.

ENIGMA—General George Washington.

WORD SQUARE—

BRUSH
ROME O
UMBER
SEERS
HORSE

WORD SQUARE—

PLATE
LAURA
AUDIT
TRIPE
EATER

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of May 27th.—Chance is 1-10.—O. R. Sheldon.

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of April 23d.—The radii are 34.—O. R. Sheldon.

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of May 6th.—Sides of quadrilateral are 16.12 plus 13.00 plus 13.88 plus 19.60 plus feet.—Geo. W. Sublette.

Answer to Geo. W. Sublette's PROBLEM of June 10th.—The numbers are 80 and 20.—Geo. W. Sublette, J. N. Soder.

Answer to Ego Geo's PROBLEM of July 23d.—5 feet.—Ego Geo, O. R. Sheldon.

Answer to Ego Geo's PROBLEM of July 15th.—54 6-11 min. past 4 o'clock.—Ego Geo, O. R. Sheldon.

RECIPIES.

PRESERVED GREEN CORN.—Boil on the cob until the milk comes to flow when the grain is pricked. Cut off the corn and pack in stone jars in the following order:—A layer of salt at the bottom, half an inch deep. Then one of corn two inches in depth, another half-inch of salt, and so on until the jar is nearly filled. Let the topmost layer of salt be double the depth of the others, and pour over all melted—not hot—lard. Press upon this, when nearly hard, thick white paper, cut to fit the mouth of the jar. Keep it in a cool place. Soak over night before using it. Green corn is difficult to can, but I know it will keep well if put up in this way. And, strange to tell, be so fresh after the night's soaking as to require salt when you boil it for the table. Should the top layer be musty, dig lower still, and you will probably be rewarded for the search.

BONE FELLOW.—Of all painful things, on there be any so excruciatingly painful as bone fello. We know of none that strak is heir to. As this malady is quite frequent, and subject of much earnest consideration, we give the latest recipe for its cure, which is given by that high authority, the London Lancet:

"As soon as the disease is felt, put directly over the spot a fly blister, about the size of your thumb nail, and let it remain for six hours, as the expiration of which time, directly under the surface of the which blister be seen the felon, which can be instantly taken out with the point of a needle or a lancet."—Drug Circular.